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Philosophical Classics for English Readers

EDITED BY

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BY

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CHEAP EDITION

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PREFACE.

THIS volume is an attempt to present, for the first time, Berkeley's philosophic thought in its organic unity. He is a unique figure in the eighteenth century, which was hardly able to interpret him. His spiritual growth is here traced in the three distinct periods of his personal history, and its issue is compared with the results of later philosophical endeavours of scientific or theological interest.

Besides new biographical material, the author is fortunate in being able to present an original portrait of Berkeley from a picture taken at an earlier period in his life than those hitherto published. It was painted when he was in Rome, in his thirty-fourth year, and was inherited by his descendant, the late Mr Robert Berkeley. This glimpse of his sanguine youth may be preferred by some to the familiar engravings which represent him at a more advanced age.

The present work, first published in 1881, and re-

produced in 1890, has been carefully revised, and in part recast, for the present edition. It is now offered as a biographical introduction to the spiritual philosophy of the universe.

Since the publication in 1871 of the Collected Works and Life of Berkeley,[1] materials of various kinds for an estimate of his place as a philosopher have accumulated. (1) About eighty letters from Berkeley to Sir John Percival, afterwards Earl of Egmont, from 1709 to 1730, have been discovered. Some account of them is given in the Seventh Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts (1879). Through the kindness of the late Lord Egmont, I have been able, in the following chapters, to avail myself of this valuable collection, and to present portions of those letters that are of biographical or philosophical interest. (2) Some letters, from or regarding Berkeley, were published in 1874 in Dr Beardsley's Life of Samuel Johnson, D.D., first President of King's College, New York. (3) To these must be added numerous appreciations and criticisms of Berkeley and his philosophy, by eminent thinkers, which have appeared in this country, and in Germany, Holland, France, Italy, and America, since 1871—in-

[1] 'The Works of George Berkeley, D.D., formerly Bishop of Cloyne, including many of his Writings hitherto unpublished. With Prefaces, Annotations, his Life, and an Account of his Philosophy.' By Alexander Campbell Fraser, Professor of Logic and Metaphysics in the University of Edinburgh. 4 vols. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press: 1871.

cluding, among others, those of J. S. Mill, Mansel, Huxley, Collyns Simon, Maguire, Mr Arthur Balfour, Mr Leslie Stephen, Dr Hutcheson Stirling, Mr Clark Murray, Professor T. K. Abbott, Professor Van der Wyck, M. Penjon, Uëberweg, Hermann Ulrici, J. Janitsch, Eugen Meyer, Spicker, Th. Loewy, M'Cosh, Professor Krauth of Philadelphia, and Noah Porter of Yale College, besides articles in the chief British and Continental reviews.

The revived study of Berkeley, in this country and abroad, has, I believe, contributed to that reconciliation of faith in natural science with faith in religious thought, of which there are signs in the closing years of the nineteenth century.

GORTON, HAWTHORNDEN,
October 1899.

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PERIOD I.—1685-1720.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE IN IRELAND.

Towards the close of the reign of Charles the Second a certain William Berkeley and his wife, according to credible tradition, occupied a cottage attached to the ancient castle of Dysert, in that part of the county of Kilkenny which is watered by the Nore. In this modest abode their philosophical son George, the eldest of six sons, was born, on the 12th of March 1685. Little is known about this William Berkeley, except that he was an Irishman by birth and an Englishman by descent. It is said that his father (or grandfather) migrated from England to Ireland early in the second Charles's reign, in the suite of his kinsman the first Lord Berkeley of Stratton. William Berkeley's wife was probably Irish; but about her even so much as this cannot be confidently asserted.

Thus ignorant of the family, one cannot, on the ground of known facts, refer the singular mental disposition of the eldest son either to heredity or to home education. The parents have left no mark. We have not light enough now to see into this Irish family life, as it went on more than two centuries ago in that secluded region. From occasional glimpses of the five younger brothers, on their respective courses, we may infer that they were ill able to sympathise intellectually with the only one in the family who revealed religious and philosophical genius. The little in the early history of the eldest brother that can be gleaned to explain his unique personality must be sought for elsewhere than in the known facts of the family life and its antecedents.

The ruined castle of Dysert, with the remains of the adjoining farmhouse, may still be seen on a grassy meadow on the bank of the Nore, about twelve miles below the city of Kilkenny. The occupants had within their view a scene well fitted to inspire a romantic boy with sympathy for nature and natural religion. The young idealist, if he was unintelligible to his family, had room to brood in solitude, during the latter years of the seventeenth century, in the fair vale through which the Nore descends, amidst the foliage of Woodstock, to its junction with the Barrow at New Ross. "I was distrustful at eight years old," he says of himself afterwards, "and so by nature disposed for the new doctrines." The imagination of the thoughtful boy, moreover, may have been roused not only by surrounding nature, but also by contemporary doings among his countrymen. The "warre in Ireland" was going on

while he was passing from his fourth to his sixth year. He was about six when the battle of the Boyne was fought, and was, we may fancy, at Dysert when James made his rapid retreat down the Nore to Waterford, and William of Orange was entertained in the ancient castle of the Butlers at Kilkenny.

A few years later we find traces of George Berkeley in Kilkenny school. The register records his appearance there on a day in early summer in 1696, when he was eleven years old. He was placed at once in the second class. This fact seems to mean that he was unusually precocious, for the school record contains hardly another instance of similar advancement. At this well-known school he spent about four years. Kilkenny, noted for its learned masters and famous pupils, has been called the "Eton of Ireland." Swift as well as Berkeley has added to its fame. One of Berkeley's school-fellows was Thomas Prior, afterwards known as the Irish philanthropist, his friend and constant correspondent for half a century. There is an idle tradition that in those school-days young Berkeley fed his imagination with "airy visions of romance," and thus weakened his natural sense of the difference between illusion and reality. The myth probably had its origin in the popular misinterpretation of his philosophy. What we have evidence of is, that his eye was then open to the phenomena of nature, and that he diligently observed curiosities in the visible world that were within his reach. The Kilkenny country, as well as Dysert, was fitted to call forth the sentiment of beauty. The city has been compared to Warwick, and Windsor, and Oxford. One who visits it cannot soon forget the

charms of the Nore, as seen upwards or downwards on an autumn day from the school meadow; or the mingling of buildings, new and old, castle, cathedral, and round tower, so happily grouped on the high ground, with the free and careless grace of nature in all the neighbouring country.

It was out of this fair Irish vale, remote from the ways of men, that George Berkeley, dimly discernible at first, unexpectedly emerged, in an island that was only beginning to take part in the intellectual and literary work going on in the world. In a few years more he became one of the masters of English literature, and proved himself, before he reached middle life, to possess the most significant philosophical mind then at work in Europe.

In March 1700, Berkeley, fifteen years of age, exchanged Kilkenny and the picturesque region of the Nore for Dublin and Trinity College. Dublin was his home for the next twenty years. Of his mental history for some time after his matriculation there was till lately no record. But we are now able to trace the working of his mind in the crisis of its development. His lately discovered "Commonplace Book" reveals him to us at Trinity College, in his twentieth year, exulting, with the impetuous enthusiasm of a warm imagination, in a new and revolutionary thought about the true meaning of the reality which we all, more or less intelligently, attribute to the world that is presented to our senses. With this new thought he had somehow then and there become inspired. Under a deep conviction of its practical value to mankind, he was longing

to make it known. It was to make short work, he was certain, of all supposed "power" in dead unconscious Matter; and so its promulgation would relieve seeming contradictions, otherwise inexplicable, by which scepticism about man's life and destiny had been sustained. It solved for him the difficulties of natural science and religion in a new philosophy, which showed that both science and religion were essentially reasonable. The conclusions to which this startling inspiration gave birth could not long be kept to himself. Before ten years at Trinity College were ended, they had begun to overflow in books. An argumentative exposition, defence, and application of his transforming Principles regarding the real meaning of the things we see and touch was pressed by him upon the world, with a subtle and ingenious advocacy, in three small successive volumes.

The influences which turned the Kilkenny youth who was "distrustful at eight years" thus impetuously and permanently towards the metaphysics of Matter, and its office in the universal system, are worthy of investigation. Some of them, at any rate, can be conjectured.

When one looks back to the condition of Dublin and its College in the beginning of the eighteenth century, new and intellectual forces are found at work. The head of the College was Dr Peter Browne, already known as the literary antagonist of Toland the deistical free-thinker. Toland's 'Christianity not Mysterious' about this time had raised a ferment in Dublin, which was probably not without effect on young Berkeley. As a controversialist in metaphysical theology, Browne's

name became afterwards more widely known. Long after this, when Bishop of Cork, he was a vigorous critic of Locke's philosophy, and of the nature and limits of theological knowledge. Those interested in such questions may refer to his two almost forgotten volumes, on the 'Procedure and Limits of Human Understanding' (1739), and on 'Things Divine and Supernatural conceived by Analogy with Things Natural and Human' (1732). The chief representative of the Irish Church in Dublin at the beginning of the eighteenth century was not less eminent as a thinker than the Provost of Trinity College. The Archbishop of Dublin during the years in which Browne was Provost was William King, still remembered as a philosophical theologian. The Archbishop's speculations about the necessarily metaphorical nature of man's knowledge of God were much in harmony with those afterwards published by Bishop Browne. He is known as the author of a treatise on the 'Origin of Evil' which engaged the controversial pens of Bayle and Leibniz.

But a stronger intellectual influence than either Browne or King was at work in Trinity College. Locke's 'Essay concerning Human Understanding,' published in 1690, was already famous, and in its fourth edition, when Berkeley came to Dublin in 1700. The 'Essay' had been introduced into the course of study, and it has ever since been a characteristic feature of the philosophical studies of the place. This early and sympathetic recognition of Locke at Dublin was due to William Molyneux, a man to be remembered on his own account, and as the friend and philosophical correspondent of Locke during the latter years of the

English philosopher's life. Molyneux was a Dublin lawyer, and a member of the Irish Parliament, fond of the new experimental methods of research, and above all an inquisitive and admiring student of Locke. The famous 'Essay' had attracted him on its first appearance, and an enthusiastic eulogy of the book followed in 1692, in the "Dioptica Nova" of Molyneux. The eulogy led to that correspondence of Molyneux with the author of the 'Essay' which throws an interesting light for several years upon Locke's recluse life at Oates in Essex, where Molyneux visited him in the month before his own sudden death.

But besides Locke, other strong modern philosophical influences had been at work. Cartesianism, with its resolute scrutiny of all human beliefs, and its disposition to spiritualise the powers of matter, had affected the atmosphere of European thought. Descartes was a familiar classic in Dublin, and Malebranche was not unknown. Hobbes and Gassendi, representatives of the opposite tendency, had helped to make inquiring persons intimate with materialistic conceptions of the universe, reviving in modern forms the atomism of Democritus and the ethics of Epicurus. Active investigations were going on regarding the laws and qualities of the things we see and touch, as well as amongst the principles and facts of the world of mind. The Royal Society, too, had been in existence for forty years, and had already diffused its spirit as far as the Irish capital. Newton had published his 'Principia' a few years before Locke published his 'Essay,' and the method of fluxions was struggling with the calculus of Leibniz among the mathematicians of Dublin.

So it happened that when Berkeley commenced his undergraduate course at Dublin, he entered an atmosphere charged with forces of reaction against the traditions and verbal logic of the schools, in physics as well as in metaphysics. But above all, the new methods of research recommended by Bacon and Descartes were taking shape in the analysis of human knowledge of which Locke was the European representative.

Such was Dublin when Berkeley began to study there. The youth himself, fresh from his native valley on the Nore, was at first a mystery to the ordinary undergraduate. Some pronounced him to be the greatest genius and others the greatest dunce in Trinity College. Those who looked at him on the surface took him for a foolish dreamer: his intimates thought him a miracle of intellectual subtlety and goodness of heart. A mild and ingenuous youth, inexperienced in the ways of men, he was also full of humorous and even eccentric inquisitiveness. Conterini, the "good uncle" of Oliver Goldsmith, and one of Berkeley's college friends, tells a story about him. They had gone together to see an execution, and young Berkeley returned curious about the sensations that accompany the process of physical death. It was agreed that he should try the experiment for himself, his friend relieving him before it was carried so far as to make a report impossible. He was accordingly suspended from the ceiling. He might have died in good earnest, for when he was released he fell senseless on the floor. But his first words on recovery were, "Bless my heart, Conterini, you have rumpled my band!" There was already undisciplined ardour in

mental analysis, and a brave indifference to life in the service of knowledge.

Through surrounding misunderstanding, according to report, he steadfastly pursued his course, full of simplicity and enthusiasm. We have some records of graver employments. Early in 1705 he helped to form a society for promoting inquiry in the line of the "New Philosophy" of Boyle and Newton in physics, and of Locke in metaphysics. There is evidence that Locke's 'Essay' was a prominent subject of debate and criticism at these meetings. The promotion of societies, literary and philosophical, was a work of which through life Berkeley seemed fond, and this Dublin reunion was the first of several with which he was connected.

The college books record the usual steps of academical advance. In 1702 Berkeley was elected a Scholar; in 1704 he passed Bachelor of Arts. He took his Master's degree in 1707, and in the same year was admitted to a junior fellowship. From 1707 onwards he was a college tutor, and Samuel Molyneux, the son of Locke's friend, was one of his pupils. His college duty must have been considerable, for he was tutor, Greek lecturer, and junior dean. Including fees, it seems that his income was hardly fifty pounds a-year; but this, measured by our standard, means at least three times as much. Still, as the family resources were moderate, we must not suppose that in the early part of his life he was in easy circumstances.

Whether or not Berkeley was intended by his family for clerical life, and was sent to Dublin with that view, does not appear. At any rate he soon took orders. He was ordained deacon in 1709 in the old College Chapel.

For more than twenty years after he was ordained, an occasional service or sermon sums up his work in this department. While ardently loyal in promoting the spiritual education of man, for which the Church professedly exists, he can hardly be called ecclesiastical in the partisan sense, or be charged with sacrificing love of truth—his earliest and latest aspiration—to the spirit of the sectarian polemic.

It is a significant fact in Berkeley's life that the free-thinking Toland, by his 'Christianity not Mysterious,' was the object of an assault conducted by clergy, college dignitaries, and members of the Irish Parliament, with even more than Irish fervour. It was the beginning of the deistical controversies that were prominent in the first part of the eighteenth century, in which Berkeley shared in the sequel, and to which his attention may have been drawn thus early. But Toland may also have quickened his anti-materialistic ardour. When Berkeley was an undergraduate, Toland was arguing that matter is eternal, and that motion is its essential property,—two principles against which Berkeley's after-life was an argumentative protest, and which later on, in his 'Pantheisticon,' Toland unfolded in a pantheism not unlike Spinoza.

Berkeley had newly emerged from undergraduate life when he became, in a modest way, an author. His earliest enthusiasm at college was mathematical, directed by his tutor, the Rev. John Hall, who first incited him, as he tells, to "the delightful study of mathematics." Two mathematical tracts in Latin, entitled 'Arithmetica' and 'Miscellanea Mathematica,' written by him three years before, were published anonymously in 1707. Even in abstract science his eager temperament appears.

These performances help us a little to take his measure, as a mathematician and a student of books, when he was hardly twenty years old. Their allusions to Bacon, Descartes, Malebranche, Locke, and the 'Philosophical Transactions,' show the bent of his early reading. One of these scientific tracts is dedicated to young Samuel Molyneux.

But a far fuller and more remarkable revelation of the state of Berkeley's mind in 1705 and the three following years than can be found either in anecdotes or rules of philosophical societies is treasured for us in his "Commonplace Book" of those years, charged with its startling inspiration.[1] On its pages he gives expression, just as they occurred, to rapidly forming thoughts about the true meaning of the things of sense and the ambient space. This must be ranked among the most precious records of the crude initial struggles of subtle philosophical genius. It enables us to watch Berkeley when he was awakening into intellectual life, in company with Hobbes and Newton and Locke, Descartes and Malebranche. We find him learning to translate into reasonableness our beliefs about ourselves and the material world and God, by the help of a deeper conception of the meaning of the word "real." We have only, he argued, to look steadily at the surrounding world in the light of this New Principle. The artificially induced perplexities of philosophers are then found to disappear,

[1] This college "Commonplace Book" of occasional thoughts and queries in mathematics and physics, metaphysics and ethics, is contained in a small quarto volume in his own handwriting. It was discovered among the Berkeley Papers in possession of Archdeacon Rose, and was first published in 1871, in my edition of Berkeley's Works.

along with their pretentious abstractions, which turn out to be empty words. Throughout these private utterings of his thoughts, fresh and earnest, written rapidly as they arose, one finds a mind everywhere labouring under the consciousness of new world-transforming Principles, which give rise to successive flashes of speculative and moral enthusiasm. He was burdened with a thought, through which things were found to be different from what philosophers had argued them to be, and also from what ordinary men had without argument taken for granted that they were. The intellectual transformation was sure, he foresaw, to offend. Men like to think about things as they have been accustomed to think about them; they are offended by an intellectual revolution which they cannot easily follow, even when the new meanings are thrown into old words, and by the strain of demands that cannot be met by those untrained in reflection. His new conception of the material world he instinctively felt must disturb those accustomed to live only in the outward and visible; who take for granted that outwardness and visibility must belong to whatever is real, and never trouble themselves to ask in what the assumed reality of things seen and felt truly consists. So we find him in these fervid effusions bracing himself to meet an enemy. Despite the ridicule and dislike his transformed material world was sure to encounter, amongst the many who put words in the place of thoughts, he resolved to deliver himself of his intellectual burden through the press, but with the politic conciliation of a skilful advocate;—in the spirit of his own words when he says that one who desires "to bring another over to his own opinion

must seem to harmonise with him at first, and humour him in his own way of talking;" adding, "From my childhood I had an unaccountable turn of thought that way."

Here are a few of many characteristic utterances in the juvenile "Commonplace Book:"—

"The reverse of the new Principle I take to be the chief source of all that scepticism and folly, all those contradictory and inexplicable puzzling absurdities, that have in all ages been a reproach to human reason. I know there is a mighty sect of men who will oppose me. I am young, I am an upstart, I am vain, 'twill be said. Very well. I will endeavour patiently to bear up under the most lessening, vilifying applications the pride and rage of man can devise. But one thing I know I am not guilty of: I do not pin my faith as the slave of any great man: I act not out of prejudice or prepossession: I do not adhere to any opinion because it is an old one, or a revived one, or a fashionable one, or one that I have spent much time in the study and cultivation of. If in some things I differ from a philosopher that I profess to admire [*e.g.*, Locke], it is for that very thing on account of which I admire him—namely, the love of truth. . . ."

He sees one great bar to the acceptance of his new world-transforming principle, which was to deliver the conception of the material world from what made matter and motion a perpetual menace to the spiritual world and a contradiction to reason. The New Principle had been concealed by "the mist and veil of words." The empty abstractions of verbal metaphysics, now mixed up with ordinary language, had to be cleared away from his own mind before he could see the light himself; and

they must be removed from the minds of others before he could get them to see it too.

"The chief thing I do, or pretend to do, is only to remove the mist and veil of words. This it is that has occasioned ignorance and confusion. This has ruined the schoolmen and mathematicians, the lawyers and divines. If men would lay aside words in thinking, 'tis impossible they should ever mistake, save only in matters of fact."

He recognises with joy the transformed world that thus arises :—

"My speculations," he finds, "have had the same effect upon me as visiting foreign countries. In the end I return where I was before ; get my heart at ease, and enjoy myself with more satisfaction. The philosophers lose their [abstract] matter ; the mathematicians lose their [abstract] extension ; the profane lose their extended deity. Pray what do the rest of mankind lose ?"

This wonderful intellectual transformation was, it seems, to be brought about simply by a recognition of the fact that the true way of regarding the world we see and touch is when it is looked at as consisting only of ideas presented in fixed order to sense, and commonly called natural phenomena. Thus :—

"The philosophers talk much of a distinction between absolute and relative things—*i.e.*, things considered in their own nature, and the same things considered in respect to us. I know not what they mean by sensible things considered in themselves. This is nonsense—jargon. *Thing* and *idea* are words of much about the same extent and meaning. By idea I mean any sensible or imaginable thing. A thing not perceived is a contradiction. Existence is not conceivable without perception and volition. I only declare the mean

ing of the word, as far as I can comprehend it. Existence is perceiving and willing, or else being perceived and willed. Existence is not intelligible without perception and volition —not distinguishable therefrom."

So we find Berkeley, charged with thoughts like these, about to issue from what he calls an "obscure corner" to become an important factor in European philosophy, now exulting in his discovery, eager to make it known, and full of hope in prospect of the beneficial revolution which it was sure to inaugurate. The governing conceptions of his philosophical life were unintelligible to his contemporaries and immediate successors; and he had only an imperfect consciousness of them himself. His place in the history of thought is better understood now, in the light of the intervening centuries. We are more able than our predecessors to determine whether one who sought with characteristic ardour to restore spiritual beliefs and high ideals of life in a materialistic age, by new principles of philosophy, was really unconsciously reversing his own intention, and opening a door for Scepticism by his short method of dealing with Materialism.

CHAPTER II.

LOCKE ON IDEAS.

We have something more distinct than the almost colourless picture of Berkeley's external life in his boyhood, when we turn to the spiritual world of his birth as a philosopher, and the early years of his mental growth. For we have then, for the most part, to look into Locke's 'Essay,' and to remember the Cartesian atmosphere in which Locke as well as Berkeley lived. While Descartes largely influenced him, Berkeley's immediate starting-point was, without doubt, in Locke, and in the 'New Philosophy.' Not that the ancients were even then wholly overlooked. In one of his earliest letters to Sir John Percival, written in 1709 (till now unpublished), he refers with admiration to Plato, tells of the delight with which he read the "Phædo" and other dialogues years before, and appreciates the harmony of the Platonic spirit with "the perfection and badge of Christianity, which is its generous contempt for the things of this sentient life."[1]

[1] In another letter to Percival, written soon after this from Dublin, he says: "I must own this corner furnishes scarce anything that deserves to be commemorated. We Irish are a nation in its nonage,

Some of the spirit of Plato may be discovered even in Berkeley's early writings. But Locke more than any other put him into the mental attitude in which we find him when he was at Trinity College. It is true that he was not a submissive disciple. Indeed his early philosophy is a constant warfare with the abstract general ideas, countenanced by Locke, to which Berkeley attributed the materialistic conception of the universe. Still, to account for what he then was, we must rethink the thoughts of Locke, and see the ultimate problems at the point of view to which we are led by the 'Essay concerning Human Understanding.'

The distinctive word with Locke is "idea." The 'Essay' is in short a treatise on ideas and their relations. But we must note the wide meaning that the word "idea" has when Locke uses it, as he does on almost every page of his book. It is not with him, as in ordinary English now, a synonym only for the fancies of the individual mind; nor, as in Platonic usage, for the eternal archetypes or intellectual scheme according to which the universe is divinely constituted. Whatever we apprehend — whether it be a natural phenomenon, visible or invisible, or a mere image in the phantasy; and whether we are conscious of it intuitively, or generically through verbal signs — in all these phases, *what is apprehended* is called by Locke an idea. When I am conscious of a pleasant or a disagreeable smell or sound — when I see the sun or touch

put under the guardianship of a people that do everything for us, and leave us the liberty of transacting nothing material for ourselves, or having any part in the affairs of Europe."

a tree—when I remember any of these objects—when I imagine a centaur—when I understand scientifically the meaning of "circle," "planet," "wisdom," "justice," or any other common term,—in all these cases Locke would say that I am having ideas. This is the meaning of the word idea, to which Descartes had given currency in the seventeenth century, and which Locke for a long time established in England.

Other terms have been used, before and since, to express this delicate and comprehensive meaning. Philosophy, as the theory of knowledge, always needs some distinctive word to express the essential relation of what is known to the power of knowing. "Idea" was used for this purpose in the seventeenth century,—with "perception," and afterwards, especially in Hume, with "impression," virtually synonymous. Mind was supposed to be manifested in having what were called ideas or perceptions or impressions; and the scientific study of mind was a study of the ideas or perceptions or impressions of which experience is composed. To investigate these was to investigate mind. It is nowadays common to use the word "phenomenon" for this purpose, and to speak of the phenomena—that is, the appearances or aspects of existence of which we are conscious in the course of our lives—rather than of the ideas or perceptions or impressions which are the material of this experience. The terms "sensation" or "feeling," although properly limited to certain varieties of states wholly internal or mental, have also been employed by some psychologists in a like comprehensive universality. At present a favourite term for the purpose is "consciousness"—"fact or state of

consciousness." What Locke and his contemporaries called "ideas" or "perceptions," we, also looking at them in their relation to a knowing mind, call "consciousnesses,"—"states" or "modes" of consciousness. But whatever the term chosen may be—"idea," "perception," "phenomenon," "impression," "sensation," "feeling," or "consciousness"—it must, in virtue of its function, be often met with in the writings of the philosopher by whom it is adopted. For all terms so used involve the fundamental assumption of philosophy—that actual things, as well as imaginary things, whatever *more* their real existence may involve, can be realised by us only through becoming involved in what we mentally experience in the course of our conscious lives. They imply that it must be only in the form of natural phenomena that the things of sense can become for us more than blank negation.

The adoption of the attitude thus presupposed in all philosophy, which the term "idea" expresses for Locke, is the first and indispensable philosophical lesson. It is a hard lesson to learn, and most of us never learn it at all. Most men, living without reflection, take for granted that outward things would be exactly what they are now felt and perceived to be, although no persons in the universe lived to perceive or realise them: they even call this crude assumption a dictate of commonsense. But philosophy is the discovery that a thing receives a part, if not all, of what it seems to be composed of—part, if not all, of all its phenomenal reality —in becoming the *object* of a sentient, percipient, imagining mind. So that a word is wanted to express this realisation of the things of sense—unreflectingly

supposed to be independent of feelings and thoughts—in the living experience of conscious persons.

"Ideas," "perceptions," "feelings," "sensations," "impressions," "modes" or "states" of "consciousness,"—"phenomena,"—are none of them unexceptionable terms when so used. Idea is notoriously ambiguous, for it is apt to take its Platonic meaning in the mind of a philosopher, and its popular meaning in the ordinary unphilosophical mind. "Perception," not to speak of other objections, is now commonly confined to exercise of the senses. "Feeling" more readily suggests either the data of touch, or else those complex states of consciousness that are commonly called emotions. "Consciousness" is apt to express individual consciousness in its internal perceptions only. A "consciousness" of what is material or external is foreign to the ordinary signification of the word, and is thus apt to be dropt out of its meaning even in philosophical discussions. On the whole, with Berkeley himself in his later writings, we may translate what he calls *idea of sense* into *phenomenon of sense*, or *natural phenomenon*, in explaining his conception of the reality of the material world.[1]

So it came to pass that "idea," throughout the 'Essay on Human Understanding,' was a recurring memorandum of the truth that, till external things were looked at on the side at which they could be considered part of the mental experience of conscious persons, they did not enter at all into the proper province of the philosopher. The "qualities" of all real, as well of all imaginary,

[1] Accordingly one might speak of the *phenomenalism* rather than the *idealism* or *ideaism* of Berkeley.

things of sense, must exist in a state of dependence on a sentient intelligence, in order that the words used about them may have meaning. What are pains and pleasures, heat and cold, tastes and smells, sounds and colours, in a dead unconscious universe, empty of all rational and even sentient beings? As light virtually creates colour, so the sensations and thoughts of a living person help to create the objects one feels and knows "Help to create" was all that Locke implied; for he, at any rate, was not prepared to dissolve extension and the implied mathematical qualities of matter in personal sentiency and cognition; nor to look at atoms and their motions on their mental side, in the way he looked at heat and cold, taste and smell, sound and colour.

The point of view suggested by the terms "idea" or "natural phenomenon" is thus at the opposite extreme to that of materialism. It assumes that body can make no appearance in the universe apart from some conscious life of mind, in which alone things can in any degree be *realised*. The materialist, on the other hand, supposes that there can be no percipient mind apart from body—on the ground of observed dependence of what goes on in human consciousness and what goes on in the human brain and nerves; and infers that all our ideas—the phenomena of which we are conscious—are ultimately and absolutely dependent on molecular motions of nerve-tissues. This inference Locke disavows; but then he professedly disregards questions about the relation of conscious acts and states to organism, in our present embodied conscious life, in his desire to concentrate regard introspectively upon "ideas" or perceived phenomena.

This use of idea, phenomenon, or any other single term, to express at once sense-perceptions common to all, and thoughts or fancies which belong only to the privacy of individual consciousness, is inconvenient, on account of the confusion it is apt to produce between actually felt experience in the external senses, and the often illusory fancies to which the word "idea" is popularly restricted. Locke overlooked this, in his wish to keep before his reader the part played by sentient and by rational consciousness, in giving reality to what could otherwise be only empty abstraction. So he did not scruple sometimes to call real things ideas, thereby meaning real things viewed as living perceptions, instead of abstract entities. But we require in consequence always to remind ourselves, in reading the 'Essay,' of the distinction, which he only obscurely presents, between those ideas that are commonly called things, and the merely private or personal ideas that form the stream of inward fancies in each individual.

But in expressing the necessary dependence of whatever is known on the sensations and thoughts of some living person, the term idea presents only one side of what Locke taught about human knowledge and belief. Looked at on the other side, ideas are manifestations or effects—so Locke took for granted—of powers in permanent beings—beings *substantially different* from the persons who are percipient of the ideas. Thus they are at once appearances of which persons are percipient, and they also represent qualities or powers which exist outside of each conscious life: they are "effects in us," produced by agents that are independent of me and you.

Through the ideas or phenomena in which existence shows itself to our senses, we find ourselves in collision with agency that is foreign to us individually.

Locke's 'Essay' is concerned chiefly with two problems. In the earlier part the ideal side of things is kept in view. There the ideas or phenomena with which men are concerned are described and arranged; their dependence on words, and the dependence of words on them, is enforced. Afterwards he unfolds and applies relations under which real knowledge and probable beliefs regarding our ideas are gradually constituted. The Second and Third Books of the 'Essay' are mostly concerned with ideas or phenomena; the Fourth Book treats of the constitution and certainty of the "knowledge" and "beliefs" suggested by the ideas that are presented to us — especially as regards our knowledge of ourselves, of God, and of things and persons external to ourselves. He explains and vindicates the certainty of affirmations we make about the Supreme Power in the universe; and also about the forces in nature, and in our fellow-men, that encompass and affect us continually in so many ways.

Two far-reaching assumptions run through Locke's treatment of human knowledge. In dealing, in the Second Book of the 'Essay,' with the materials of knowledge, he takes for granted that things—whatever else they may be—must, so far as we are concerned with them, be at least ideas or phenomena of which some one is conscious. In the Fourth Book, in explaining how the appearances of which we are conscious yield real knowledge, he also takes for granted the principle of

causality, and its adequacy to carry us from the mere appearances of sense to unperceived realities. He does not, like Kant, try to justify the principle of causality as a necessary constituent in all coherent experience. He assumes it dogmatically, as a truth that is proceeded upon by all sane men, whether they have ever reflected about it or not. His account of the agents in the universe which the phenomena we are conscious of presuppose, is his philosophical application of the principle of causality.

By an application of the causal principle, Locke finds intellectual necessity for Eternal Mind: it is the only intelligible cause of his own existence as a self-conscious individual for nearly sixty years before the 'Essay' was given to the world. This implies that he believes in his own existence—presupposed in his having ideas, and of which, like Descartes, he declares that he has thus an "intuitive knowledge."[1] By another application of the same principle of causality, he found

[1] See 'Essay,' B. IV. ch. ix., x. The tenth chapter attracted much attention in Locke's own generation. Curiously, in consequence, he was actually accused of Spinozism. Nowadays it is the fashion to contrast what is called his "individualism" with the "universalism" of the Dutch metaphysician. The charge of Spinozism was alleged in a forgotten 'Dissertation upon the First Chapter of the Fourth Book of Mr Locke's "Essay"; wherein the author's endeavours to establish Spinoza's atheistic hypothesis are discovered and confuted.' By William Carroll (London, 1706).—Locke is charged by Caroll with giving "the holy name of God to the eternal existence of cogitation and extended material substance, differently modified in the whole world—*i.e.*, maintaining the eternal existence of the whole world itself, all by an ingenious abuse of words;" and this is argued at great length throughout the book. The first Lord Shaftesbury is said to have referred on his deathbed to the same chapter (then unpublished) as the source of his own theological heterodoxy.

himself under an intellectual necessity (or something like it) for believing that "extended and solid substances" outside are the causes of the ideas or phenomena he was conscious of in touching, seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, moving, and in experiencing the pleasures and pains involved in having bodily sensations. The existence of God he had argued for, on the ground of the mental need for a cause which we feel in view of the bare fact of the commencement of our own existence. Knowledge of the real existence of "other things or powers besides God, external to what we call ourselves," Locke did not find—as he did that of God—in the bare fact of our having begun to live conscious of ideas. The external world of matter is discovered, he thinks, only in and through those particular sorts of mental experience in which "other things, *by actual operation upon our senses*, make themselves perceived by us. The mere having an idea of any outward thing no more proves the real outwardness of that thing than the picture of a man proves his real existence, or than the visions of a dream make it a true history." It is only "the *actual receiving of ideas of sense from without* that gives us notice of the existence of external things, and makes us know that *something* doth exist at that time without us, which causeth that idea in us; though perhaps we neither know nor consider how it does it. It takes not from the certainty of our senses, and the ideas we receive by them, that we know not the manner in which they are produced."[1]

Locke, in short, announced that he found himself, when perceiving phenomena through the five senses,

[1] See 'Essay,' B. IV. ch. xi.

and then only, aware of ideas or phenomena which had this remarkable characteristic—that they appeared and disappeared independently of his own will, while they all presupposed his own conscious existence. The principle of causality, taken as a dogma, yielded the conclusion that, because he himself began to exist, *Infinite* Mind must also exist. The dependent character of the phenomena whose appearance and disappearance he perceived by his five senses seemed to him, on the same causal dogma, to imply the present existence of *finite* substances and powers, extended and solid, the external causes of the (by us) uncontrollable phenomena of sense; and to be the basis of our habitual beliefs in their orderly, and therefore interpretable, connection with one another. The Ego, God, and Matter are thus the three related realities of human knowledge, of which Locke's 'Essay on Human Understanding' was the rationale.

Throughout the 'Essay,' Locke is fonder of dealing with the question of how our ideas and knowledge have been gradually evolved than with the other question of what they now are and logically imply—irrespectively of the processes through which they have become what they are. Yet it is surely as they are now, and not as they were in infancy or among savages, that we must deal with them. Philosophers of all schools have to proceed in their reasonings from the point of view to which they have attained when they philosophise, and not from the point of view of the undeveloped infant, or the unintellectual barbarian.

Locke, moreover, seems to suppose a human experi-

ence which begins in relationless ideas or phenomena, of various sorts, admitted through the five senses. He hardly supposes an inexplicable perception of individual things, like Reid, still less the rational constitution of presented phenomena, like Kant. He speaks as if all of us at first saw colours *per se*, heard sounds *per se*, were conscious of smells and odours *per se*, or had sensations of heat and of cold *per se;* and as if afterwards, by some unexplained mental process, we learned to combine those different sorts of isolated sense phenomena into the aggregates or "complex ideas" commonly called individual things or individual substances. The possibility of our perceptions of sense presenting necessarily, and therefore from the first, phenomena in complexity and in conjunction, or individual things, seems never to occur to him. A student of the 'Essay' is accustomed by it to suppose that human beings consciously advance from the phenomenally simple and isolated to the phenomenally complex and connected, in the growth of their real experience—that they were in the beginning conscious only of the isolated phenomena of which individual things now seem to consist;—instead of conversely proceeding by abstraction, from compound things already given, to separable qualities, of which sensible things are found, by analysis, to be made up. The question whether there may not be necessary laws, in the constitution of intellect and experience as such, which *require* complexity and connection, as the condition of our having any intelligent experience—any real perception even of sense-given phenomena—was foreign to Locke's way of thinking. He argued as if a sensible phenomenon *per*

se was a possible perception; as if there was no occasion to inquire whether the "complexity" involved in the phenomenon being regarded as the so-called "quality" of a "thing" might not be necessarily included in distinct perception. Why phenomena are significant of one another, and thus interpretable, and how they become aggregated as qualities of individual things, were questions which afterwards occurred to Berkeley, Hume, and Kant.

The two operations of Locke—his classification of the ideas or phenomena of which we are conscious, and his account of the causes of those data of experience—gave Berkeley his intellectual starting-point. He had been taught by Locke, in the first place, to regard matter chiefly on its ideal side; and, at least in the "secondary qualities" of matter, to regard primarily their ideal or perceived existence. In this connection, too, he had been apt to demand a concrete image for every term he could make use of, and to reject as jargon terms whose meanings could not be realised in imagination: yet he had been told that some ideas are "abstract"—science and philosophy being concerned with those supposed "abstract ideas."—But he had been induced, in the second place, to assert, with Descartes, his intuitive knowledge of his own spiritual existence.—Then, proceeding without question upon the validity of the principle of causality, he had been led to demonstrate from his own conscious existence that of Eternal Mind; and to infer as probable, from the existence of the ideas or phenomena of his five senses, the existence of extended and solid substances. Locke, besides, had throughout the 'Essay' taught Berkeley to

reduce the data of human experience of the universe to the phenomena given in sensation and reflection. But he had not taught him to inquire into the rational constitution of experience, as Kant did afterwards; nor into the nature of those judgments of the common sense, or common reason, which he nevertheless used for the transformation of otherwise irrelative ideas or phenomena into real knowledge and warrantable beliefs.[1]

Taking this departure from Locke, Berkeley's own mental history till his death presents three stages for development. Trinity College, Dublin, was the centre during the First stage, with travel in France and Italy, and a literary outcome in his juvenile, which are also his most celebrated, philosophical treatises. The Second was reached when, at the age of thirty-five, he engaged in projects of philanthropic idealism which absorbed his energies in middle life, and carried him for a time to America: it closes with another instalment of contributions to philosophy. In the Third, we are carried back to Ireland: it, too, like the preceding periods, makes its own characteristic addition to metaphysical literature. Each period in the life is a stage in the development of the philosophy, which, still fragmentary, attains its most comprehensive form in the closing period.

The pervading lesson of the whole is, that the things we see and touch are superficial shows, of which the office is to reveal the Eternal Spirit or Univeral Reason

[1] In the Prolegomena and annotations of my edition of Locke's 'Essay' (2 vols., Clarendon Press, 1894) I have treated more fully of Locke and his account of human knowledge.

wherein we live and have our being; and that we become conscious of this, intellectually in true philosophy, and practically through assimilation to God. The negative part of this lesson — the unsubstantiality and impotence of matter — is prominent in Berkeley's juvenile works; his later thoughts are more occupied by the Divine Spirit or Universal Reason, in whose presence the sensible world is forgotten, and earthly objects vanish away.

CHAPTER III.

VISUAL IDEALISM.

Berkeley soon began to reveal to the world the intellectual secret about Matter to which an independent critical study of Locke's 'Essay' had helped to lead him. But at first he did not fully announce the startling change in the common and crude way of thinking about the things of sense in which the secret consisted. He unfolded it by degrees. In 1709, when he was twenty-four years of age, he approached it cautiously, in the form of an explanation of what is implied by "seeing" things, or an 'Essay towards a New Theory of Vision.' This 'Essay,' dedicated to Sir John Percival, was his first step. It is an argument for the mind-dependent nature of the material world—as far as our power of *seeing* the things of which the world consists can carry us into knowledge of its real nature; but it does not prejudge the further question of what the things of sense may turn out to be in our sense perceptions of touch and locomotion. The conclusion is—that ordinary seeing is really foreseeing; that "sight" of tangible things is really expectation, produced by habit, of encountering phenomena of touch and muscular movement, as the

consequence of the phenomena of which we see, which thus become *signs* of the unseen and expected.

Some sentences which Locke introduced into the second edition of his 'Essay,' on the suggestion of his friend Molyneux, probably helped to draw Berkeley into this path of approach to his new philosophical principles regarding the mind-dependent nature of the material world. The passage is worthy of study in this relation.

"The ideas we receive by sensation," Locke says,[1] "are often, in grown people, altered by the judgment, without our taking notice of it. When we set before our eyes a round globe of any uniform colour—*e.g.*, gold, alabaster, or jet—it is certain that the idea thereby imprinted on our minds [*i.e.*, the phenomenon of which we become immediately conscious] is a flat circle, variously shadowed, with several degrees of light and brightness coming to our eyes. But we have, by use, been accustomed to perceive what kind of appearance convex bodies are wont to make in us, what alterations are made in the reflections of light by the differences in the sensible figures of bodies; and the judgment presently—by an habitual custom—alters the appearances into their causes, so that, from that which is truly variety of shadow or colour, collecting the figure, it makes it pass for a mark of figure, and frames to itself the perception of a convex figure, and an uniform colour, when the idea we receive from hence [the phenomenon of which we are thence visually conscious] is only a plane, variously coloured, as is evident in painting. To which purpose I shall here insert a problem of that very ingenious and studious promoter of real knowledge, the learned and worthy Mr Molyneux, which he was pleased to send me in a letter some months since, and it is this: 'Suppose a man born blind, and now adult, and

[1] See 'Essay,' B. II. ch. ix. § 8.

taught by his touch to distinguish between a cube and a sphere of the same metal, and nearly of the same bigness, so as to tell, when he *felt* the one and the other, which is the cube and which the sphere. Suppose then the cube and the sphere placed on a table, and the blind man made to *see: quære*, whether by his sight, before he touched them, he could now distinguish and tell which is the globe, which the cube.'—To which the acute and judicious proposer answers, No. For though he has obtained experience of how a globe, how a cube, affects his touch, yet he has not yet obtained the experience that what affects his touch so and so must affect his sight so and so; or that a protuberant angle in the cube, that pressed his hand unequally, shall appear to his eye as it does in the cube. I agree with this thinking gentleman, whom I am proud to call my friend, in his answer to this problem; and am of opinion that the blind man, at first sight, would not be able with certainty to say which was the globe, which the cube, whilst he only saw them; though he could unerringly name them by his touch, and certainly distinguish them by the difference of their figures felt. This I have set down and leave with my reader, as an occasion for him to consider how much he may be beholden to experience, improvement, and acquired notions, where he thinks he had not the least use for or help from them."

Among Locke's readers Berkeley at any rate was very soon led into the train of thought apt to be set agoing by this paragraph. His "Commonplace Book" is full of similar problems. Here are a few examples:—

"*Quære:* Whether a man born blind, made to see, would at first give the name of distance to any idea intromitted by sight, since he would take distance that he had perceived by touch to be something existing without his mind, but he would certainly think that nothing seen was without his

mind. . . . By extension a born blind man would mean either the perception caused in his mind by something he calls extended, or else the power of raising that perception; which power is without in the things extended. Now he could not know either of these to be in visible things till he had tried. . . . A blind man, at first, would not take colours to be without his mind; but colours would seem to be in the same plane with coloured extension; therefore [coloured] extension would not seem to be without the mind. . . . *Quære*, whether the sensations of sight arising from a man's head be liker the sensations of touch proceeding from thence or from his legs; or is it only the constant and long association of ideas in themselves entirely different that makes us judge them to be the same? What I see is only variety of colours and light. What I feel is hard and soft, hot or cold, rough or smooth. What resemblance have these thoughts with those? A picture painted with great variety of colours yet affects the touch in one uniform manner. I cannot therefore conclude that because he sees two I shall feel two; because I see angles or inequalities, I shall feel angles or inequalities. How, therefore, can I—before experience teaches me—know that the visible legs are, because two, connected with the tangible ones; or the visible head, because one, connected with the tangible head? Writers in optics are often mistaken in their principle of judging of magnitudes and distances. . . . Length is perceivable by hearing; length and breadth by sight; length, breadth, and depth by touch."

Berkeley's 'Essay on Vision,' after showing the kind and amount of knowledge afforded by the eye alone, without the assistance of the other senses, proceeds to verify by facts his startling inference—that the visible world is a visible language, expressive of those experiences of solid and resisting things which even one born blind would derive from the sense of contact and of bodily

movement; and that it is this simply because, by custom, persons with sound eyes have learned rapidly to translate the language of vision into the tactual experience which the visible phenomena naturally signify. Our adult visible world is the original sense experience of sight unconsciously translated; the fact of the translation is discovered by psychological analysis. When an adult person, possessed of good eyes, stands in the centre of an extensive landscape, he seems to unreflecting common-sense to apprehend by sight alone the fields, and trees, and houses, and hills, and animated beings around, with the concave vault of heaven over all; and he supposes that he has been always able to see thus. What Berkeley does in his 'Essay' is to produce facts of mind which oblige our supposed observer to modify this unreflecting supposition; since they prove to him that, instead of seeing the landscape and its contents "at a glance," he has been mentally translating what he sees into expected experience of touch—helped by instinctive trust in an established connection between visible and tangible phenomena.

The facts produced by Berkeley for verifying this far-reaching theory are of various sorts.

In the first place, the consent of most persons who have studied the original data of sight since the days of Aristotle is taken as sufficient evidence of the fact, that the only phenomena of which we are at first percipient in seeing are those of *colour*. Now it is certain that visible colour must be dependent on sentient mind. It is impossible that visible colour could continue to exist after the annihilation of all sentient mind. Colours, then, are only ideas or phenomena; so that ideas

or phenomena are really all, properly speaking, that we originally see. It is true, as we find when we examine the organic conditions under which we are at first sentient of colour, that the visible phenomena are accompanied by invisible muscular sensations in the organ of sight; but these, too, are only ideas or phenomena. Sights and their organic accompaniments, in short, are all mind-dependent. They are ideas — natural or orderly ideas.

But this is not all. The sight of colour is the sight of phenomena of superficial length and breadth,—in other words, we see coloured extension as visible length and breadth. But we cannot see depth or thickness—distance outward in the line of sight—in seeing this coloured extension. The best optical authorities, including Molyneux, grant, Berkeley argues, that outness, or distance in a line straight out from the eye, cannot be seen. For, sight presupposes rays of light proceeding in straight lines from the differently sized, shaped, and placed things of touch, which we *seem* to see in their respective places and sizes, at various distances from one another and from our bodies, in an ambient space. But all these lines of light fall endways and not sideways upon the retina; so that it can be only the end, and not the depth outwards, of each line that is seen. Outness, accordingly,—that is to say, the interval between the visible end of the line and its other end,—cannot be seen. The lines themselves cannot be seen, only their inner extremities; and thus the "outness" of the coloured extension is invisible: it must be discovered by some other means than sight only.

Further: No mathematical or *a priori* demonstration

of the existence of this third dimension of space can be drawn from the superficial extension we see, or from the organic phenomena that accompany vision, when these are taken as data. For, the phenomena of coloured extension presented to sight, with which alone seeing *per se* has to do, have no necessary connection in reason with the depth or outness of extension; nor, of course, with the size or quantity of the three-dimensioned space occupied by solid objects; nor with the place in space which one solid thing occupies relatively to another. We find these space-relations only after we have had experience of the sort supplied by the sense of movement, and have compared that experience with experience of coloured expanse, which in the order of nature is steadily connected with the former.

Belief in the connection between the original data of touch and the original data of sight is brought about —so Berkeley concludes—by what he variously calls "custom," "experience," "suggestion." In these terms he implies that there is really at work a sort of unconscious induction. Spontaneous visual induction, like the conscious and deliberate inductions of science, and on the same principle of the intelligibility because consistent orderliness of nature, is explicable, he would probably say, in the way that all human foresight, including the foresight acquired by sight, is explicable. Visual "perceptions" of the solid things placed in the ambient space are really, on this supposition, unconscious inductions. They are expectations, generated in us and for us, before we were able, by a conscious comparison of instances, to form them deliberately for ourselves. This unconscious inference implies *a* mind at work among

the data of sight and touch, other than the mind of the man who sees. Reason is somehow latent in visible nature; and *this* explains how adults are able to see as they now see. Visible extension itself—whether it be the visible room in which I am now writing, and its visible contents, or the starry heaven with its celestial furniture—is only a number of ideas or appearances; and these ideas or appearances are capable of being interpreted, because their changes are reasonable or orderly, and thus part of the intelligible natural system of which science is the inadequate interpretation.

In the presence of verifying facts such as these, Berkeley argued that we must, as reasonable beings, acknowledge that what seemed a visible panorama, taken in by the eye at the first glance, has really been formed by custom, through an unconscious interpretation of what we actually see. This enables us now to *foresee* whenever we see. Sight in its adult state has become habitual foresight: vision is now prevision. So much is sight now foresight, that one cannot now see without also foreseeing. It is a question (though Berkeley does not make it one) whether an infant even has ever seen thus. If an adult could now perform the experiment of seeing without foreseeing, then ambient space, with its contents of solid things, at different distances from us, variously sized and placed, would suddenly dissolve before our eyes, leaving only superficial coloured extension, along with certain ocular sensations of muscular resistance and movement, which in ordinary experience receive no attention.

The conclusion of the whole is, that our supposed

spectator was profoundly mistaken in asserting that he *saw* an external world. The original vision of phenomena of colour, along with felt organic sensations in his eye, had been mentally transformed by custom into the wonderful panorama which he ignorantly attributed to vision alone.

The ultimate implicates of this unconscious transformation scene Berkeley hardly recognises in his juvenile 'Essay.' An attempt to reach it conducts to deep philosophical problems. It involves the *rationale* of all expectations of natural events, and so scientific induction. One would have to inquire, for instance, whether the foresight, latent in ordinary adult seeing, is due (*a*) to unconscious psychical or cerebral processes; or (*b*) to very rapid and therefore unremembered conscious processes; or (*c*) to the divine agency going on in all nature, with which the human spirit is somehow concerned. To solve such problems we must also be able to settle what are the necessary intellectual presuppositions of inductive expectation—those without which "experience," in any fruitful meaning of that term, would be impossible, because wholly uninterpretable.

These questions do not rise in Berkeley's early 'Essay on Vision.' He is contented to argue that we gradually learn "by experience" to see outward distances, the nearest as well as the most remote. He founds this experience on "suggestions," similar to those by which, with consent of all, we learn to estimate the distance of things that are far away from us; but he does not pursue the philosophy of this so-called suggestion. He

is satisfied to refer it to custom. The argument, however, takes for granted that the suggestions involve elements adequate in reason to convert visual ideas or phenomena into reliable signs, or what is virtually a visual language. This visual language is the prominent part of the language of nature. The original visual phenomena are recognised, under this conception, as a grand procession of natural signs, which we have been learning to interpret ever since we were born, in the beautiful Book of Vision that is always open before us. We began to learn the lesson so early that all remembrance of original vision, or the mental state in which we were before we learned it, has passed away. Our only possible visual experience *now* consists of the original ideas or phenomena of sight, interpreted, through help of habit, under our religious trust in the permanence, and therefore significance, of the connection between visual and tangible phenomena in nature. This has generated an assurance that we find to be at least practically reasonable. We are all now led to believe that visible colours, and some accompanying muscular sensations in the eye, are reliable signs of approaching experiences of muscular resistance, as well as of bodily pains and pleasures; so that they can in this way usefully regulate our lives.

But, although Berkeley stops here in his 'Essay on Vision,' one is apt to ask, What means this universal sense-symbolism—this trustworthy significance in the ideas which we see? What sort of connection does it imply? What accounts for the connection? A sufficient answer to these questions would carry us far —not only into the philosophy of sight but into the

philosophy of the material world—even into that highest philosophy which Berkeley in the end of his life approached.

One thing that he insists much upon is, that when we try the mental experiment, so far as we can find, the connection between the visual signs and their meanings is not one of absolute necessity; for there seems no absurdity in supposing that the "meaning" of the signs might have been made different from what it now is. We find, when we try, that the meanings can be reversed in imagination. The present signs, for instance, of a thing being far away, might otherwise have been made to mean that it is near. That signs and their meanings are connected in the ways they are, is, as far as we can discover, only the result of a constitution of nature that is arbitrary—that might have been different from what it is. What the actual connections are, can be found by observation: future observation might conceivably show that the language of nature has altered. That is to say, in our visual interpretations, as indeed in all interpretation of nature, we are dealing with "laws" which are the expressions of ever Active Reason and Will;—not with the outcome of blindly fated necessity. What we call laws of nature are, as it were, God's habit of acting in regulating visible and tangible phenomena. Though the laws which make nature interpretable are steady enough for the purposes of human action, we find no eternal rational necessity for their being what they are, more than we do for the spoken or written signs of Greek, English, or any other artificial human language signifying what they do. A different set of meanings from the established ones now attached

to each visible sign would not involve a contradiction in terms.

But if inexorable mathematical necessity does not appear in natural law, how do the visual appearances become so connected in our minds that their true meanings can be suggested? How comes it that judgments about what they signify now arise in our minds as soon as we open our eyes? Berkeley does not discuss this. He would probably say that it is due to faith, somehow induced, in the supremacy of divine agency in the universe. At least this is implied in the intelligibility and trustworthiness of sensible signs. This faith attributes consistency to the tissue of the web we are unravelling, whenever we are interpreting what we see. And to this result he approached in the end.

"Upon the whole," he concludes, even in his juvenile Essay, in summing up the results of this his first speculative adventure in the world of the senses[1]—"upon the whole, I think we may fairly conclude that the proper objects of vision constitute a UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE of the AUTHOR OF NATURE, whereby we are instructed how to regulate our actions, in order to attain those things that are necessary to the preservation and wellbeing of our bodies, and also to avoid whatever may be hurtful and destructive to them. It is by their information that we are principally guided in all transactions and concerns of life. And the manner in which they signify and mark unto us the objects which are at a distance is the same with that of languages and signs of human appointment, which do not suggest the things signified by any likeness or identity of nature, but only by an habitual connection that experience has made us observe between them. Suppose one who had always continued

[1] 'Essay on Vision,' §§ 147, 148.

blind to be told by his [seeing] guide, that after he had advanced so many steps he shall come to the brink of a precipice, or be stopped by a wall—must not this to him seem very admirable and surprising? He cannot conceive how it is possible for mortals to form such predictions as these, which to him would seem as strange and unaccountable as prophecy doth to others. Even those who are blessed with the visive faculty find therein sufficient cause of admiration. The wonderful art and contrivance wherewith it is adjusted to those ends and purposes for which it was apparently designed — the vast extent, number, and variety of objects that are at once, with so much ease, and quickness, and pleasure, suggested by it—all these afford subject for much and pleasing speculation, and may, if anything, give us some glimmering analogous prenotion of things which are placed beyond the certain discovery and comprehension of our present state."

A modern scientific observer is ready to ask whether this beautiful hypothesis is verified by observation. Does it appear, when the experiment is tried, that persons born blind, when first made to see, are really in the state supposed by this theory of adult sight involving interpretation of visual signs? The direct way, it may be thought, for finding out what sight *per se* is, would be to take a human instance (if one can be got) of vision, altogether isolated from the experience of other senses. An experimental isolation of the simple data of each sense, by what is called the method of difference, is one method of science; and it may seem possible to use this method in cases of persons born blind, whose power to see has suddenly been communicated to them. It may therefore be asked, whether the facts which in such cases present themselves correspond to the hypothesis — that seeing out-

ward things is analogous to reading a prophetic book, which the reader has learned through custom to interpret?

Berkeley did not busy himself in experiments of this kind, although he expressed an interest in them. He argued out his conclusions from data of mental experience, diligently reflected upon and analysed. He inferred from this evidence what the first mental experience of those rescued from born-blindness would be; he speculated, too, about the probable mental experiences of "unbodied spirits," able to see, but, from their birth, destitute of the sense of muscular resistance and the power of corporeal movement. In a note to the second edition of the 'Essay on Vision,' indeed, he referred with curiosity to a reported instance of one born blind who had been made to see, and who thus might be "supposed a proper judge how far some tenets laid down in several places in the foregoing Essay are agreeable to truth,"—adding, "If any curious person hath the opportunity of making proper interrogations, I should gladly see my notions either amended or confirmed by experience." But his own testing facts were found within, and not by experiments on born-blind persons. An appeal to inward experience for verification of the alleged antithesis between the original data of sight and the original data of touch; with the evidence—virtually given by common-sense—contained in the fact that we *spontaneously trust* the significance of what we see, and of the organic sensations that accompany seeing,—seemed to him to fulfil the conditions of proof. And indeed, the many physiologists and mental philosophers since Berkeley, who have tried to settle by external experi-

ments how we learn to see, have illustrated the truth of Diderot's remark, that to interrogate one born blind, in a way fitted to test this theory of sight, is an occupation, from its difficulty, not unworthy of the united ingenuity of Newton and Descartes, Locke and Leibniz.

Even more remote from Berkeley is the endeavour of some German *savants* of this generation to explain, by an examination of the functions of the visual organs, how we get our present perception of space, and how we are able to distinguish between the simultaneously presented phenomena of sight and touch. Whatever physiological interest the relative scientific speculations of Lotze, Helmholtz, or Wundt may possess on other grounds, from Berkeley's point of view, at any rate, they have little philosophical value. Facts and investigations of this sort are of interest in a physiological study of the organic conditions of seeing, which aims at determining in exact terms the dependence, under our present constitution, of states and acts of conscious life upon the constitution of nerve-tissues. They may help us to read better the acts of consciousness in terms of the organic structure and its functions. But they do not solve, nor even entertain, the philosophical questions that are involved in the very presuppositions of physiological and all other natural science. The Book of Vision, whose existence Berkeley discovered, is one that might be possessed and used by any unembodied spirit to whom phenomena were significant of other phenomena. The one cardinal point with him was that, in fact, we find visible appearances continuously arising in our experience—which we also find are practically capable of being treated as signs; so that they thus make what may be called

a Book of Vision, which we are all continually reading. The profound philosophical lessons in self-knowledge and in divine knowledge involved in this were what he laboured in later life to unfold. But his first lesson in philosophy was, that when we seem to be seeing the things of sense around us, in their places in an "ambient space," we are really interpreting visual ideas, or natural phenomena, which form one of the Books of God,—a Book too which is in literal truth a Book of Prophecy.

CHAPTER IV.

IDEAL REALISM.

Berkeley's discovery of the Divine Book of Vision paved the way to his discovery of what might be called the Divine Book of Sense, of which the Book of Vision was only a part. "The bookseller who printed my 'Essay on Vision,'" he writes from Dublin, in March 1710, to Sir John Percival, then in London,[1] "imagining he had printed too few, retarded the publication of it on that side the water till he had printed this second edition. I have made some alterations and additions in the body of the treatise, and in the Appendix have endeavoured to answer the objections of the Archbishop of Dublin. There still remains one objection—that with regard to the uselessness of that book of mine; but in a little time I hope to make what is there laid down appear subservient to the ends of morality and religion, in a Treatise I have now in the press, the design of which is to demonstrate the existence and attributes of God; the immortality of the soul; the realisation of God's pre-knowledge and the freedom of man;—and by showing the emptiness and

[1] Percival MSS.

falsehood of several parts of the speculative sciences, to reduce men to the study of religion and things useful. How far my endeavours will prove successful, and whether I have been all this time in a dream or no, time will show. . . . I do not see," he adds, "how it is possible to demonstrate even the being of a God, on the principle of the Archbishop—that strictly goodness and understanding can no more be assumed of God than that He has feet and hands; there being no argument that I know of for God's existence which does not prove Him at the same time to be an understanding, wise, and benevolent Being, in the strict, and literal, and proper meaning of these words." The book foreshadowed in this letter appeared in the summer of 1710, as the "First Part" of a 'Treatise concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge, wherein the chief Causes of Error and Difficulty in the Sciences, with the Grounds of Scepticism, Atheism, and Irreligion, are inquired into.' In this unfinished fragment of a still larger work, Berkeley's new view of the meaning of reality, when reality is affirmed of the things of sense, is explained, defended, and applied. It contains the germ of a Philosophy which was never fully unfolded in his own thought.

The 'Essay on Vision' dealt only with the world of visual ideas or visual phenomena. The 'Treatise on Human Knowledge' was an endeavour to show that what was true of what we see was also true of the whole material world of sense. In his explanation of the way in which we learn to see things, Berkeley had tried to show how what was at first a chaos of unintelligible visual impressions is found to be an interpretable system

of visual signs, dependent in their very nature on a sentient mind. To the same sort of transformation, he now argued, our conception of the whole material world is liable. For, by analysis, all the solid things in space, and space itself, are found to dissolve into what he called ideas, but what we call natural phenomena presented in sense. These ideas or phenomena, through custom-induced "suggestions" of their naturally established relations of coexistence and succession, are gradually converted—when our sense experience is in process of making—into perceptions of what we now call "qualities" of "sensible things." Thus, not the "manifold" (as Kantists say) of the visual sense only, but the entire "manifold" of sense impressions, becomes—through what Berkeley calls "suggestion"—an intelligible material world; which, because intelligible, can be converted by us into natural science. Visual signs or symbolism accordingly expands, in the 'Treatise on the Principles of Human Knowledge,' into a universal natural symbolism. The successive and coexisting sensations of colour and visible size, shape, and position; of resistance and tangible size, shape, and position, involved in the consciousness of our bodily movements; of sound, taste, smell, heat and cold,—all go to make up the alphabet of our real perceptions of solid, extended, and movable things. The letters of this natural alphabet of the senses would have been meaningless if they had not been mind-dependent phenomena of sense—presented in living mind, and interpretable by mind—which we find them to be. Were they not this, we could not have any scientific experience of what is real. We

begin to learn the letters of this natural alphabet when we first use our five senses. In continuing to use them, we gradually learn, through a rude and crude experience, the meanings implied in their orderly connection. The intelligence by degrees dimly awakened in the "suggestions" which follow, is what we call our "sensuous perception" of the material world. It is throughout previsive. Developed sensuous perception is expectation, and expectation is essentially prophetic.

Take any material object—large or small—a planet or a grain of sand; inorganic or organic—a mountain or a man's body. We find, when we reflect, Berkeley argues, that our knowledge of it amounts to this,—that it consists of significant sense phenomena, dependent on sentient minds, aggregated in the clusters which we call individual things through the constant orderliness or significance of their sense-given constituents. Those clusters of sense-given phenomena are then distinguished from one another, so as to make up the separate things we see—by help of perception and imagination of space. The sense phenomena of which the individual and locally separated things of sense are made up, rise, we find, in the current of our personal consciousness, without effort on our part, and indeed without our being able to summon or to dismiss them at our pleasure. The laws which govern their appearance, disappearance, and reappearance in our perception, are not laws made by us, or which we can change. But the daily employment of every human being is that of interpreting, well or ill, the sense-given signs that are presented to him, on due interpretation of which his happiness is found largely to depend. He is daily determining, by the sensations

of which he is actually conscious, what other sensations, which he is not yet conscious of, may be expected. Progress in this work of interpretation is what we commonly call progress in knowledge of nature. In the very beginning of the process of interpreting sense phenomena, we find ourselves obliged to assign to the presented clusters what we call their respective places, sizes, and distances from one another. We are by this means enabled to realise, with distinctness, the real and very practical "dream" in which we all share—of a world of solid and extended things, contained in a vast ambient space—a world, too, by our relation to which we find the pains and pleasures of our lives determined throughout their whole course.[1]

Berkeley's Principles of Knowledge, unfolded in his Treatise, seeks to explain by "suggestion," and ultimately by trust in common sense or intuitive reason, the practically real dream in which life, amidst the transitory shows of sense, is found to consist. The explanation is given in his account of the construction of knowledge and physical science, out of phenomena that are necessarily dependent on a person who is conscious of them. How, for instance, he might ask, does my merely private or personal "feeling of heat or colour" get translated into part of the universal reasonable dream—if we may call that a dream which is practically real — in the way it does in the judgment, "I see the sun"? How do my sensations of

[1] This may be compared with Kant's account of the manner in which, through an *a priori* perception of space, the irrelative phenomena of sense are *obliged* to take on space and time relations, as the condition of their metamorphosis from their original chaos into distinct individual things.

resistance, and colour, and odour become perception of an orange? For in perceptions we *know* "things" and their "qualities," and do not merely *feel* transitory, uninterpreted, sense impressions. If we did not rise above these, we could have no experience of the "sun" or the "orange";—no experience at all in any intelligible meaning of the word. There must therefore be something more in external things than isolated sense-presented phenomena, for these *per se* do not constitute perception or sense knowledge of outward things and the material world. What is this "something more" through which the sense ideas were converted into the sun or the orange — things now distinctly recognised as real?

This deep question hardly occurs to the unphilosophical, and so it does not perplex them.

The philosophers, in Berkeley's time and previously, had answered it in a way that seemed to him the chief cause of the rise of scepticism in its perennial struggle with faith. For they had, he thought, given a meaningless answer, unrealisable by any human mind; and that although an intelligible and easily realisable one lay ready to their hands. They had thus confused the minds of men, and put into circulation a number of empty words. "It might with reason be expected," he exclaims, in the opening sentences of his new book of 'Principles,' "that those who had spent most time and pains in philosophy should enjoy a greater calm and serenity of mind, a greater clearness and evidence of knowledge, and be less disturbed with doubts and difficulties than other men. Yet so it is, we see the illiterate bulk of mankind, that walk the highroad of

plain common sense and are governed by the dictates of nature, for the most part easy and undisturbed. To them nothing that is familiar appears unaccountable, or difficult to comprehend. They complain not of any want of evidence in their senses, and are out of all danger of becoming sceptics. But no sooner do we depart from sense and instinct to follow the light of a supreme principle—to reason, meditate, and reflect on the nature of things—but a thousand scruples spring up in our minds concerning those things which before we seemed fully to comprehend. . . . The cause of this is thought [*e.g.*, by Locke] to be the obscurity of things, or the natural weakness and imperfection of our understandings. . . . But perhaps we may be too partial to ourselves, in placing the fault originally in our faculties, and not rather in the wrong use we ourselves make of them. It is a hard thing to suppose that right deductions from true principles should ever end in consequences which cannot be maintained or made consistent. . . . Upon the whole, I am inclined to think that the far greater part, if not all, of those difficulties which have hitherto amused philosophers, and blocked up the way to knowledge, are entirely owing to ourselves—that we have first raised a dust, and then complain we cannot see." [1]

Berkeley's aim, accordingly, was to recover men from their empty abstractions; and to do this by an appeal to their enlightened common sense of reality. This was virtually to think back into the Eternal Reason in which we all consciously or unconsciously share; and which the things of sense either conceal or reveal, in

[1] Works, vol. i. pp. 137, 138.

proportion as we have a superficial or a deep perception of their meaning. The empty answer of metaphysical abstraction to the question about the deep meaning of the word Matter was his crucial instance of philosophically raised "dust," followed by the complaint that "we cannot see." Even Locke had taught that the things of sense are not themselves actually present in perception, but only those effects of their agency which we call "sensations" — pleasant or painful; and he had further taught that we are obliged, by our instinctive causal judgment, to refer the sensations to independent bodies outside, that are unperceived in sense, and whose existence we can only infer. He had also distinguished bodies, in their primary qualities and mathematical relations, from bodies in their secondary qualities; which last depend, he suggested, on established relations between the atoms of matter and sentient mind. In the absence of all sentient beings, Locke's Matter had only the qualities which make its mathematical essence, and which he called primary. These last, as well as the former, he further taught, are attributes of an unperceived substance; and of unperceived substance we have no other notion, he confessed, than that it is "something we know not what." In all this, Berkeley insisted, there is nothing that we can realise, in perception or in imagination, except the ideas or sense-presented phenomena themselves. The mathematical qualities, when supposed to exist independently of the others, and the material substance, too, are empty metaphysical abstractions; or they dissolve into sensuous phenomena, like the secondary qualities. With these last, indeed, when we look into

the facts, we find the former are inseparably blended, and they must therefore share their fate.

It was this dark background—this fiction—of independent material substance, Berkeley thought, that made the sense-given phenomena we see and touch conceal the Eternal Spirit really revealed in sense. When once a fictitious substance called Matter, endowed with virtual Omnipotence, was acknowledged, it became the convenient centre to which all that happened in the universe of sense and of consciousness might be referred for explanation. The phenomena presented to sense, and vaguely attributed to Matter, were then for the mass of mankind the type of all reality. This supposed independent Matter in the dark background was thus deified, and offered as the last explanation, not only of what is perceived, but also of the percipient act. Even Locke raised much "philosophical dust" about Matter, and then complained that he "could not see." Materialists since Locke, led astray by abstract and unintelligible dogmas, fancy that they find in dead, unconscious Matter "the promise and potency of all self-conscious life."

In the midst of the philosophical and popular prejudice that Matter could do this or that—could make perceptions, and could even evolve from itself all the rational life that exists in the universe—Berkeley loudly called for an answer to certain previous questions, the answers to which had been, and still were, unreflectingly assumed. What, he asked, is the true philosophical meaning of the words Matter, Space, and Power? Have we the warrant of intuitive certainty, or common sense (in the philosophical meaning of "common sense"),

for attributing independent subsistence and independent powers to something totally inconceivable, *behind* the sense-presented phenomena which compose the things we see and touch? Let us inquire, he may be supposed to ask, what the true office of sense phenomena and phenomenal things is, in human life. What am I justified, as a reasonable human being, in assuming, when I say that in my perception of a stone, for instance, I am not merely conscious of certain transient sense impressions of colour and hardness, but that I know something that is not transient, nor subject to changes which appear and disappear in the senses of men—that is not dependent on some person being percipient of it, but on the contrary persists through all changes and interruptions of conscious state and act in all intelligent beings? Bravely press questions of this sort—one almost hears Berkeley saying throughout his book—and then any one who can truly read the revelations of our common consciousness *must* put an interpretation upon the word "reality," when it is applied to sense phenomena, very different from the incoherent interpretation put upon it by Locke, and by a whole array of philosophers. For it can be demonstrated that the unperceived "substance" called Matter, and the unperceived "powers" this substance is supposed to possess, are not only unnecessary —because expressive of no known office discharged by sense-presented things in the economy of our experience —but that the very suppositions they proceed upon are meaningless, and even self-contradictory. They are the "dust" raised by those who find in consequence that they "cannot see."

To correct all this, Berkeley simply tried to be more

thorough-going or real than Locke. The 'Essay on Human Understanding' had only done half its work, he thought, when its author had maintained that *only* the secondary qualities of Matter consist of spirit-dependent phenomena. The truth is, Berkeley argued, that there can be no such Matter as the residuum, consisting exclusively of primary or independent qualities, supposed by Locke. Matter consists of mind-dependent appearances. Therefore the *only* substantial and powerful realities must be Spirits: all other real things are only orderly sense phenomena presented in the form of individual things to spirits by Supreme Spirit. The phenomenal things which alone we see and touch, while in their own way real, are nevertheless unsubstantial and impotent: the dogma of material substances and powers existing unrealised in any living percipient is meaningless abstraction.

On the other hand, we do find that a persistence and power, involving neither inconsistency nor meaninglessness of verbal abstraction, is given in the fact of being percipient, or of living experience. This is implied in the inevitable use of the personal pronoun "I," and the proposition, "I can." Here is sufficient ground for the assertion that if the universe is to be regarded as it really is, it must, in the last analysis, be regarded as grounded in spirits or percipient persons, with their respective sense experiences, by means of which, used as signals, they are brought into communion with one another. This conception of things and persons had appeared in the "Commonplace Book." "Nothing," he there wrote,—"nothing properly but persons—*i.e.*,

conscious things—does exist. All other things are not so much existences themselves as manners of the existence of conscious persons." The universe, so conceived, seemed to him the only intelligible universe, from which the dust of metaphysical abstractions had been cleared away. One knows what one means in using the personal pronouns "I" and "you." One's own continued personal existence, through changes and interruptions of conscious state, is an intelligible fact of which all sane people are convinced. It is a datum of the common sense or common reason—a principle involved in the very constitution of human experience. One understands, too, what one means by significant and therefore interpretable ideas of sense. But a pretended unperceived and unperceiving substance and power, which philosophers dogmatically affirm when they speak of Matter and its forces, and which ordinary mortals, echoing their meaningless jargon, speak about too—this is empty verbalism, which is not and cannot be experienced in sense, or imagined either, by any human or other conscious being. Accordingly we find ourselves obliged, when we verify the meanings of the words we use, to think of the Universe as consisting of our own self-conscious spirit, persistent and more or less powerful, and of other self-conscious spirits, in like manner persistent and powerful;—each spirit percipient of its own interpretable sensuous ideas. It is by interpreting the ideas presented to sense that we form natural science; also, by using those phenomena of sense as signals of communication with other persons, we can infer to some extent the conscious states and acts of other spirits that coexist with our own—all governed

and sustained in this Cosmos by the supremacy of Spirit. In habitual conception of the Universe as constituted in spiritual life, Berkeley believed that the "dust" metaphysicians had raised by their abstractions would subside.

All this may be viewed as a dawning apprehension on his part of the higher truth—that visible and tangible things, while significant of the deepest and truest reality, are themselves only the shows of life: they are recognised in their insignificance when reflection reveals the Eternal Spirit, in whom we all live and move and have our being. In true philosophy we become speculatively aware of all this: we realise it practically in the divine life of religion.

And all this, Berkeley would say, is self-evidently true. It is too evident to admit of being proved by reasoning. The conception, he would probably have added, is found on trial to satisfy the facts of experience, and to resolve the difficulties of thought; and if it can do this, it has the only sort of evidence that is available for any philosophical theory. The true office of philosophy is to awaken the latent common reason, or at least to raise it above the low level at which it rests in the stupid gaze of the unreflecting multitude; though Berkeley insists that even their confused conception turns out in the end to be nearer his reconciling truth than the abstractions of the schools, or the halting metaphysic of Descartes and Locke. "It is indeed an opinion strangely prevailing among men," he exclaims, "that houses, mountains, rivers, in a word, all sensible things, have an [abstract] existence, distinct from their being [actually] perceived [by any person]. But with

how great an assurance and acquiescence soever this principle may be entertained in the world, yet whoever shall find in his heart to call it in question may, if I mistake not, find it to involve a manifest contradiction." That is to say, it involves a contradiction to suppose that we can see what is at the same time wholly unseen —that we can perceive that which is not perceived— that we can conceive what is inconceivable. We cannot detach phenomena from perception: apart from perception they must cease to be real. All this is self-evident. "Some truths there are," he proceeds, "so near and obvious to the mind, that a man need only open his eyes to see them. Such I take this important truth to be, that all the choir of heaven and furniture of the earth—in a word, all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world—have not any substance without a mind; that their very being is to be perceived or known [*i.e.*, to be realised in the significant and interpretable experience of a conscious person]; that, consequently, so long as they are not actually perceived by me, or do not actually exist in my mind, or in that of any created spirit, they must either have no existence at all [which would be contrary to common sense], or they must exist in the mind [thought and will] of some Eternal Spirit."

Berkeley's "external world," in its deep meaning, consists of persons external to his own personality; persons using the intelligible and interpretable sense ideas, by which, as sense signals, they communicate with one another. This externality of spirit to spirit *is* an intelligible conception. One *can* understand what is meant in saying that one's own personal consciousness, with its

successive states or acts, is numerically different from the conscious life of another person. The one conscious life might cease, and the other still go on; just as self-conscious lives, with their respective sense experiences, were going on long before one's own began. Powers of *this* sort, spirits external to my spirit, can conceivably, and do actually, exist. It is only external powers of this sort that reason — if we reflect on what this implies—permits one to acknowledge, when one finds himself obliged to recognise the existence of a world independent of his own individual life. This externality of individual spirits to individual spirits, with their respective interpretable sense experiences, which is an intelligible sort of "externality," seemed enough for the demand of common sense. Even if the hypothesis of unperceived and unperceiving external substance were not absurd or contradictory, it was enough to say with Occam, "*entia non sunt multiplicanda præter necessitatem.*" "I assert, as well as you," Berkeley might say, "that, since we are all affected independently of our will and contrivance, we *must* grant the existence of forces without, *referable to some power not ourselves*, and for whose activity we are not responsible. The point of difference is as to *what* this powerful external being is. You will have it to be abstract independent matter, or I know not what third nature. I prove it to be spirit. For, from the effects I find in my senses, I am sure there must be action in the universe that is independent of my personal power, and that this action is volition; but if there are external volitions, there must be a Will external to my own, for my will is the centre only of my own personality and sphere of responsibility.

Again, the things I see and touch, or else their archetypes, must exist out of me; but, the things being sense-given appearances only, neither they nor their archetypes *can* really exist or act *per se*. There is therefore Omnipresent Intellect and Will. Now, Will and Intellect constitute Spirit. The active Cause, manifested through impotent and unsubstantial, but for us practically real, significant, and interpretable phenomena of sense, must therefore be Spirit."

Berkeley's belief in the existence of an external material world thus resolves into belief that the ideas presented to the senses coexist and undergo metamorphosis cosmically — not chaotically. This belief he recognises as latent in the "common sense," but which has to be developed by custom and reason. Accordingly, in dealing with sense-given ideas, he proceeds on this common sense assumption—that they are intelligible, or that they make up an experience which is interpretable; and that they are also the common medium through which the existence of other conscious persons, with some of *their* thoughts and feelings, may be ascertained by each person. Belief in the reality of the material world, according to Berkeley's explanation of it, is belief in *this;* and the practical dissolution of this belief he would at once grant to be inconsistent with the saneness of the person in whose mind it was dissolved. He was ready to retain the name "matter," provided that we all accustom ourselves to mean *only this* when we use it. That the things of sense are only ideal or phenomenal—significant and interpretable phenomena, whose reality consists in their orderly manifestation by and to a perceiving mind—does not dissolve

them in chaos or illusion. On the contrary, we find ourselves obliged, in every action we perform, to take for granted that sense phenomena (mixed up though they are with consciousness, and dependent for their appearance upon a living person being percipient of them, nevertheless) spring up independently of the individual's will, in an orderly or intelligible and therefore interpretable way ; and we have all hitherto found that the assumption we are thus obliged to make has been verified by the event. The seeming *chaos* of sense phenomena, which at first burst upon our nascent intelligence, becomes, through this common sense suggestion, converted into the *cosmos* which all physical research presupposes, and which the discoveries of science are making more and more familiar to each succeeding generation. The obligation to assume cosmos to be latent in what at first would seem to be mere chaos, is the firm platform on which we emerge from the obscure infantile consciousness of sense. This gradually developed obligation of reason, and not the irrational state of the sensuous infant, is surely our criterion of the deeper reality. Our intelligible experience is surely more real and trustworthy than unintelligible sensations; and that whatever the process and conditions may be according to which its development takes place.

The material world is thus, for Berkeley, *more* than mere isolated sense ideas. It consists of sense-presented ideas which, in the way now explained, are connected in aggregates, and in their ordered aggregates form the System of Nature—all evolved for us from the chaos of our infant sensations as custom-developed expectations of the common sense. Our knowledge of a planet, or

of a grain of sand, is resolved, under this conception of the material world, into the postulate of reason—that sense phenomena cannot exist in isolation—that each is significant of other sense phenomena, of which at the time one is not actually conscious, and which therefore are not at the time presented in sense, but which, under laws of nature, may be expected. There is in this the all-pervading faith, that changes in nature cannot be capricious, but must proceed according to rules, on the observance of which our personal happiness depends. *Faith in these rules* is the "something more" than mere phenomena, which forms the very essence of our conception of material things; for it is that without which phenomena could not be converted into individual objects.

This common sense conviction is at the bottom of Berkeley's explanation of the things of sense. He finds it dimly in all men; realised in individuals in different degrees. Although it is the animating soul of human action — the very essence of reasonableness —it is, as such, incapable of independent proof. The permanence of law in nature — the intelligibility or rationality of the system of phenomena which are presented to us—is taken for granted, because we cannot help taking it for granted, if we are to have any experience of placed things.[1] These would dissolve in chaos if it could not be taken for granted. It is this persistent conviction that is the pith and marrow of all perceptions of sense, and all expectations about things

[1] So Berkeley held; for he seems to regard space and its relations as an *arbitrary* issue of natural law; not, like Kant, as the *necessary* precondition for converting relationless sensations into objects.

of sense; also of all physical or natural science, which is only deeper realisation of what is perceived or expected. It is the reality which is latent in our ordinary conceptions of the world. An apple, for instance, consists of sense phenomena which are the appointed signs of each other—*their* significance being *its* "consistence." It is not true to say that I can see the apple which is placed before my eyes; for I can *see* only those phenomena or ideas in the apple that are visible: many of its qualities are invisible; for they are tangible, gustable, odorous, &c. Still—through reasonable trust in what the visible phenomena naturally signify—I have a sufficient assurance that, percipient as I am of the *visible* phenomena, I might, if I pleased, *become* percipient of those other phenomena commonly called the taste, or the smell, or the hardness of the apple. In other language, the visible phenomena "suggest" the other phenomena, as steadily aggregated with them in natural order, thus creating and guaranteeing their practical externality to each suggesting mind.

As far as one can affirm, prior to experience, any sort of sense phenomenon might, in orderly coexistence or succession, be cosmically connected with any other sort of sense phenomenon. So far as that goes, the connections of phenomena in the real phenomenal world *may* be called "arbitrary."[1] We have, notwithstanding, a *working* trust that particular sorts of sense appearances, which we have always found connected with certain other phenomena, will *continue* connected with such, so that the one sort is permanently—*i.e.*, really—a reli-

[1] As Berkeley calls them—reiterating this sort of "arbitrariness" of the laws of nature.

able sign of the other sort, and may, in all circumstances, be trusted to for being this—at least, till we discover some deeper law to which the observed connection is subordinate, and by which it may be modified. This deeper law may in turn be the subordinate of one deeper and more comprehensive still, and so on indefinitely. But however far we go, we cannot outrun our faith in *ultimate* order, meaning, or rationality—moral at last, to be in adaptation to man in his spiritual integrity and higher life. That there is Moral Order or Reason latent in the Universe is involved in its fitness to be lived in and reasoned about: *this* at least is not arbitrary. But the actual order of sense-presented nature *is* for us arbitrary, if it might have been, or may ever become, other than it now appears to be. And this it might have been, or may yet become, in consistence with the deepest and truest Order of All, which is in God—

"Whose kingdom is where time and space are not."

It was thus that Berkeley transformed Locke's world of sense. Locke treated the *secondary* qualities of matter as our sensations, while still holding to the dogma of independent material substance. Berkeley treated in like manner *all* the qualities of matter—dismissed as superfluous Locke's unintelligible substance and cause of sensations—and finally explained reality in things, by the activity of the Eternal Mind, in and through which the sense-given phenomena, otherwise meaningless, become parts of a scientifically interpretable system. Common sense asserts that we know external things as they are; Berkeley explains that external

things as they are are divine ordered ideas or natural phenomena, and regards this explanation as the expression of *enlightened* Common Sense.[1]

[1] Berkeley's express aim was to show the harmony of the philosophical conception of the material world with enlightened common sense, or common reason. I am glad to adduce in support of this the high authority of the late Dean Mansel, in his comparison of Berkeley with Reid: "The two systems [Reid's and Berkeley's] may be regarded as in truth sister streams, springing from the same source, and flowing, though by different channels, to the same ocean. The aim of both alike was to lay a sure foundation for human knowledge in principles—secure from the assaults of scepticism; the method of both alike was to appeal to the common consciousness of mankind, as a witness to the existence of certain primary and ineradicable convictions on which all others depend, and to disencumber these convictions from the rash hypotheses and unwarranted deductions with which they had been associated and obscured in previous systems of philosophy. Both, in short, though with very different results, were united in appealing from the theories of metaphysicians to the common sense of men."—Mansel on the "Idealism of Berkeley," in his 'Letters, Lectures, and Reviews,' p. 382.

With Berkeley the reality of the material world is rooted in faith in the divine order of sense-given ideas, faith in this natural orderliness being the common sense of men; while the supposition of abstract material substance and power is inconsistent with reason.

CHAPTER V.

SIR JOHN PERCIVAL AND DR SAMUEL CLARKE.

One is curious to ascertain the first impression produced by Berkeley's new conception of the reality of Matter, as consisting not in an unperceived and unintelligible Power, but in the Divine regulation of the phenomena that are presented in sense; and by his bold challenge to the philosophical world. We can now, for the first time, have this curiosity gratified. His hitherto unpublished correspondence with his friend Sir John Percival throws light on much that happened. He was eager, we find, to hear what people had to say about the Principles promulgated in the 'Treatise on Human Knowledge,' but in those days there was no adequate periodical criticism. "If when you receive my book," he wrote from Dublin, in July 1710, to Sir John,[1] then in London, "you can procure me the opinion of some of your acquaintances who are thinking men, addicted to the study of natural philosophy and mathematics, I shall be extremely obliged to you." In the month after he was assured that it was incredible what prejudice can work in the best geniuses—nay, even in the lovers of

[1] Percival MSS.

novelty. "For I did but name the subject-matter of your book of Principles to some ingenious friends of mine," Sir John adds, "and they immediately treated it with ridicule, at the same time refusing to read it, which I have not yet got one to do; and indeed I have not been able myself to discourse on the book, because I had it so lately: neither, when I set about it, may I be able to understand it thoroughly, for want of having studied philosophy more. A physician of my acquaintance undertook to describe your person, and argued you must needs be mad, and that you ought to take remedies. A bishop pitied you, that a desire and vanity of starting something new should put you upon such an undertaking; and when I justified you in that part of your character, and added other deserving qualities you have, he said he could not tell what to think of you. Another told me an ingenious man ought not to be discouraged from exerting his wit, and said Erasmus was not the worse thought of for writing in praise of folly; but that you are not gone so far as a gentleman in town, who asserts not only that there is no such thing as Matter, but we ourselves have no being at all. My wife, who has all the good esteem of you that is possible, from your just notions of marriage and happiness,[1] desires to know, if there be nothing but Spirit and ideas, what you make of that part of the six days' creation that preceded man."

[1] Sir John Percival's marriage took place shortly before this letter was written, and Berkeley had sent his congratulations. Sir John was for many years a member of the Irish House of Commons. He was raised to the Irish peerage as Lord Percival in 1715, and in 1733 as Earl of Egmont. In 1732 he obtained a charter to colonise the province of Georgia in North America. He died in 1748, aged 60. I owe these extracts from his correspondence to the kindness of the late Lord Egmont.

Berkeley's reply to this, in September 1710, is philosophically interesting.[1] "I am not surprised," he says, "that I should be ridiculed by those who won't take the pains to understand me. My comfort is, that they who have entered most into what I have written speak most advantageously of it. If the raillery and scorn of those who critique what they will not be at the pains to understand had been sufficient to deter men from making any attempts towards curing the ignorance and errors of mankind, we should not have been troubled with some very fair improvements in knowledge. The common cry's being against any opinion seems to me, so far from proving it false, that it may with as good reason pass for an argument of its truth. However, I imagine that whatever doctrine contradicts vulgar and settled opinion had need be introduced with great caution into the world. For this reason it was that I omitted all mention of the non-existence of Matter in the title-page, dedication, preface, and introduction to my 'Treatise on Human Knowledge'; that so the notion might steal unawares on the reader, who possibly would never have meddled with a book that he had known contained such paradoxes. If, therefore, it shall at any time be in your way to discourse your friends on the subject of my book, I entreat you not to take notice to them that I deny the being of Matter in it, but only that it is a treatise on the principles of human knowledge, designed to promote true knowledge and religion, particularly in opposition to those philosophers who vent dangerous notions with regard to the existence of God and the natural immortality of the soul, both which I have en-

[1] Percival MSS.

deavoured to demonstrate, in a way not hitherto made use of."

With characteristic fervour he disclaims "vanity and love of paradox" as motives of the book, and professes an earnest belief in the non-existence of unperceived and unperceiving Matter,—"a belief," he adds, "which I have held for some years, the conceit being at first warm in my imagination, but since carefully examined, both by my own judgment and that of ingenious friends." What he deprecated most of all was, "that men who have never considered my book should confound me with the sceptics who doubt the existence of sensible things, and are not positive as to any one truth, no, not so much as their own being—which I find by your letter is the case of some wild visionist now in London.[1] But whoever reads my book with attention will see that there is a direct opposition betwixt the principles contained in it and those of the sceptics, and that I question not the existence of anything that we perceive by our

[1] We see here how Berkeley disclaims, by anticipation, the metaphysical nihilism or pan-phenomenalism of Hume, according to whom "I" am only a succession of "impressions and ideas," out of which succession the notion of a self or ego is artificially formed in imagination; and also disclaims the indetermination of Kant as to whether "I" am a permanent substance or a transitory phenomenon. Yet in passages of his "Commonplace Book," Berkeley himself seems to approach a similar view. Thus he says,—"The very existence of ideas constitutes the soul. Mind is a congeries of perceptions. Take away perception, and you take away mind. Put the perceptions, and you put the mind." To the same effect he is perplexed by the probability of unconscious intervals during sleep, which on this view would mean suspended existence: he argues that a person cannot exist in an unconscious state, but suggests a theory of time to solve the difficulty. "One of my earliest inquiries was about Time, which led me into several paradoxes that I did not think fit or necessary to publish."

senses. As to your lady's objection," he continues, "I am extremely honoured by it. I must beg you to inform her ladyship I do not deny the existence of the sensible things which Moses says were created by God. They existed from all eternity in the Divine Intellect; and then became perceptible (*i.e.*, were created) in the same manner and order as is described in Genesis.[1] For I take creation to belong to things only as they respect finite spirits, there being nothing new to God. Hence it follows that the act of creation consists in God's willing that those things should become perceptible to other spirits which before were known only to Himself. Now both reason and Scripture assure us that there *are* other spirits besides men, who, 'tis possible, might have perceived this visible world as it was successively exhibited to their view before man's creation. Besides, for to agree with the Mosaic account of the creation, it's sufficient if we suppose that a man, in case he was created and existing at the time of the chaos of sensible things, might have perceived all things formed out of it in the very order set down in Scripture, all which is no way repugnant to my principles."[2]

Sir John in his next letter, written from London in

[1] Note this early expression of Platonic Idealism, blending with Berkeley's spiritual *ideaism* or *phenomenalism.*

[2] This touches a difficulty often urged against the conception of the wholly ideal reality of sensible things — viz., its inconsistency with the real existence of the material world before there were human beings in whom there could be ideas. *Phenomenalisation* not being possible in the absence of all sentient spirits, the world, it is argued, could not have existed before man (as we know it did), if its reality is only dependent. It does not seem that Berkeley's explanation of this difficulty is weakened by any progress in modern science. Discoveries in science can still be described in terms of ideal realism.

October,[1] reports that the new book had fallen into the hands of the highest English authority in metaphysics then living, still a young man under forty. This was Dr Samuel Clarke, who had produced his 'Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God' four years before. Berkeley's 'Treatise' had also been seen by Whiston, Newton's successor at Cambridge. "Two clergymen have perused your book—Clarke and Whiston. Not having myself any acquaintance with these gentlemen, I can only report at second hand that they think you a fair arguer and a clear writer; but they say your first principles you lay down are false. They look upon you as an extraordinary genius, but say they wish you had employed your thoughts less upon metaphysics, ranking you with Father Malebranche, Norris, and another whose name I have forgot—all of whom they think extraordinary men, but of a particular turn, and their labours of little use to mankind on account of their abstruseness. This may arise from these gentlemen not caring to think after a new manner, which would oblige them to begin their studies anew, or else it may be the strength of prejudice."

Berkeley was vexed by the expressions of Clarke and Whiston. He sent to Sir John's care a letter to each of them, hoping, through him, "to obtain their reasons against his notions, as truth is his sole aim"; and there is nothing he more desires than being "helped forward in the search for truth by the concurring studies of thoughtful and impartial men. As to what is said of ranking me with Father Malebranche and Mr Norris, whose writings are thought to be too fine-spun to be of

[1] Percival MSS.

any great use to mankind, I have this answer, that I think the notions I embrace are not in the least coincident or agreeing with theirs, but indeed plainly inconsistent with them in the main points, inasmuch as I know few writers I take myself at bottom to differ more from than from them. Fine-spun metaphysics are what I on all occasions declare against, and if any one shall show anything of that sort in my Treatise, I will willingly correct it."

"Your letters to Dr Clarke and Mr Whiston," Sir John replied,[1] "I delivered to two friends of theirs. Dr Clarke told his friend in reply that he did not care to write you his thoughts, because he was afraid it might draw him into a dispute upon a matter which was already clear to him. He thought your first principles you go on are false; but he was a modest man, his friend said, and uninclined to shock any one whose opinions on things of this nature differed from his own."

This was a great disappointment to Berkeley's youthful ardour. "Dr Clarke's conduct seems a little surprising," he writes.[2] "That an ingenious and candid person (as I take him to be) should refuse to show me where my error lies, is something unaccountable. For my own part, as I shall not be backward to recede from the opinion I embrace when I see good reason against it, so, on the other hand, I hope to be excused if I am confirmed in it the more upon meeting with nothing but positive and general assertions to the contrary. I never

[1] Dec. 28, 1710—Percival MSS.
[2] Jan. 19, 1711—Percival MSS.

expected that a gentleman, otherwise so well employed as Dr Clarke, should think it worth his while to enter into a dispute with me concerning any notions of mine. But, seeing it was so clear to him that I went upon false principles, I hoped he would vouchsafe, in a line or two, to point them out to me, that so I may more closely review and examine them. If he but once did me this favour, he need not apprehend I should give him any further trouble, or offer any the least occasion for drawing him into a dispute with me. This was all my ambition, and I should be glad if you have opportunity that you would let his friend know this. There is nothing that I more desire than to know thoroughly all that can be said against what I take for truth."

The attempt failed. Clarke was not to be drawn into a statement of his objections in the complacent way in which, three years afterwards, he dealt with Joseph Butler, then a student at the Dissenters' Academy at Tewkesbury, in their famous correspondence about Clarke's 'Demonstration.' Berkeley's attempt to correspond with Clarke is, however, referred to by Whiston in his 'Memoirs of Clarke.' "Mr Berkeley," he there says, "published in 1710, at Dublin, the metaphysical notion that Matter was not a real thing; nay, that the common opinion of its reality was groundless, if not ridiculous. He was pleased to send Mr Clarke and myself each of us a book. After we had both perused it, I went to Mr Clarke to discourse with him about it to this effect, that I, being not a metaphysician, was not able to answer Mr Berkeley's subtle premises, though

I did not believe his absurd conclusion. I therefore desired that he, who was deep in such subtleties, but did not appear to believe Mr Berkeley's conclusion, would answer him. Which task he declined."

What Clarke's answer to Berkeley would have been, if he had chosen to commit himself, we may perhaps gather from a passage in his published writings. Seven years after this correspondence through Sir J. Percival, he wrote as follows, in his 'Remarks on Human Liberty': "The case as to the proof of our free agency is exactly the same as in that notable question, Whether the World exists or no? There is no demonstration of it from experience. There always remains a bare possibility that the Supreme Being may have so framed my mind that I shall always be necessarily deceived in every one of my perceptions, as in a dream, though possibly there be no material world, nor any other creature existing besides myself. And yet no man in his senses argues from thence that experience is no proof to us of the existence of things. The bare physical possibility, too, of our being so framed by the Author of Nature as to be unavoidably deceived in this matter [our free agency] by every experience of every action we perform, is no more any just ground to doubt the truth of our liberty, than the bare natural possibility of our being all our lifetime in a dream, deceived in our belief of the existence of the material world, is any just ground to doubt the reality of its existence."

The word "dream" is used in ordinary language for the illusory visions of sleep, so that it is apt to suggest illusion when it is applied to the mind-dependent

universe of Berkeley, notwithstanding its steady order, and its fulfilled prophecies which reasonably regulate our actions.[1]

[1] So Leibnitz contrasts the real dreams of sense reality with the capricious dreams of sleep: "Nullo argumento absolute demonstrari potest, dari corpora; nec quicquam prohibet *somnia quædam bene ordinata* menti nostræ objecta esse, quæ a nobis vera judicentur, et ob consensum inter se quoad usum veris æquivaleant."—De modo distinguendi Phænomena Realia ab Imaginariis (1707).

CHAPTER VI.

OBJECTIONS TO THE NEW PRINCIPLES.

THE objections to the theory of an essentially spiritual universe, which reached Berkeley through Sir John Percival and others, annoyed him as expressions of misconception founded on prejudice or indifference. Not long after the publication of the First Part of the book of "Principles," accordingly, he prepared a volume of "Dialogues," in which, after the manner of Plato, plausible objections to the new doctrine could be readily discussed. The little book appeared in London in the summer of 1713, entitled, 'Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous: the Design of which is Plainly to Demonstrate the Reality and Perfection of Human Knowledge, the Incorporeal Nature of the Soul, and the Immediate Providence of a Deity; in Opposition to Sceptics and Atheists.' Philonous tries to convince Hylas of the unsubstantiality and impotence of the things of sense, and to show that, as revealed in the five senses, the material world is dependent and evanescent; the permanence, independence, qualities, and powers attributed to things visible and tangible being all referable immediately to the constant agency of Eternal Mind.

English philosophical literature contains no work in which literary art and a pleasing fancy are more attractively blended with subtle argument than these 'Dialogues.' Soon after they appeared, Sir John Percival wrote[1] to the author that "he had now made his meaning much easier to understand, dialogue being the proper method for meeting objections." "It is not common," he added, "for men possessed of a new opinion to raise so many arguments against it as you have done. Indeed I am much more of your opinion than I was before. The least I can say is, that your notion is as probable as the one you argue against. There is at least equal difficulty against both opinions."

It is to be remembered that the ideas or phenomena of which things are composed, according to Berkeley's conception of their constitution, are not, as with Fichte, modifications of one individual mind only, but are, on the contrary, perceived "under laws of nature," in all human minds. They exist "in mind," moreover, "not by way of mental mode or attribute, but by way of idea"; and this is an altogether unique manner of existence. We are each of us, accordingly, related to the "real waking dream," with all its innumerable practical consequences to us, simply as percipients are related to what is perceived—with whatever sort of "otherness" this *sui generis* relation may be found to involve; but we are not so related as that we become what we perceive, or that what we perceive is the ego. Our conviction of our spiritual individuality and identity, and of our personal responsibility, distinguishes us as conscious persons from the things of sense, which are

[1] July 17, 1713—Percival MSS.

realised only in perception. The things of sense and the ego are both real, but the one is known only as dependent phenomenon, the other as hyper-phenomenal.

Still more must it be remembered that the material world need not consist only of the phenomena that are presented in the senses possessed by *man*. Phenomena of innumerable sorts, which cannot appear in human sense experience, may form part of the experience of other sentient spirits, and thus contribute to the composition of *their* things of sense, while those of which we are percipient may all be wanting to them. Their world and our world would in that case have wholly different qualities. In the ingenious philosophical romance of Voltaire, the inhabitants of the planet Saturn are credited with seventy-two senses, and are "every day complaining of the smallness of the number." This was few indeed compared to the resources of "Micromegas, an inhabitant of one of the planets of the Dog-star," with his "one thousand senses" and millions of years of life, and withal his "listless inquietude and vague desires." His perceptions of material realities would be enormously enlarged, as compared with ours; but perceptions of mind-dependent matter still—not the contradictory phenomena that could not be phenomena, which Berkeley ridiculed.

Professor Huxley, in the piano argument of his charming essay on Berkeley,[1] seems to overlook this point. He supposes a piano that is percipient of sound and nothing else. Having no conception of any other mode of existence, he makes it reason thus: "All my

[1] In 'Macmillan's Magazine,' June 1871.

knowledge consists of sounds and the perception of the relation of sounds; now the being of sound is to be heard; and it is inconceivable that the existence of sounds I know should depend upon any other existence than that of the *mind* of a hearing being." That sounds depend (as *we* know they do) on "the existence of a substance of brass, wood, and iron," would, he thinks, be voted unimaginable, and therefore impossible, by a Berkeleyan piano. The piano in that case must have been ill-trained in Berkeley's conception, which puts no limits on the sorts of phenomena to which sounds may be related as sensible signs. These may be more numerous than even in the world of Micromegas. Berkeley might say that even then we are still within the world of phenomenal matter, and no nearer the unphenomenal or unperceived substance, unrealised in living perception—against which his argument was directed, than we were at the beginning. The Berkeleyan piano that reasoned according to Berkeley would admit the possibility of brass and wood and iron, though their visible and tangible phenomena must be unimaginable by it; but it would reject abstract substances that are neither matter realised in perception nor percipient mind, as to us at best a synonym for Nothing.

It is further to be remembered, in dealing with objections to this ideal realism, that it reserves the possibility of our having sensuous experience, and perceptions of sensible things, in a disembodied life as well as in this embodied state of existence. There is no known necessary connection between the dissolution of that portion of matter which I call my body, and the extinction of my ability to perceive objects in the material world.

"It seems," Berkeley says, "very easy to conceive the soul to exist in a separate state, divested from the laws and limits of motion and perception with which she is embarrassed here, and to exercise herself on new ideas [perhaps phenomena by us now unimaginable], without the intervention of those tangible things we call our bodies. It is even very possible to conceive how the soul may have ideas of colour [*i.e.*, might be percipient of phenomena of colour] without an eye, or of sounds without an ear." This train of thought, it may be granted, is less satisfactory now, when physiological science insists that the organic unity of conscious life and our corporeal frame is proved by a sufficient induction of facts—whatever may be the abstract possibility of supposing our perceptions of the material world to go on in consciousness without our having bodily organs. The only conscious life we have any experience of, it would be argued, is one in organic union with the corporeal structure, in correlation with which it grows, so that speculations like this of Berkeley are inconsistent with our experience.

Nevertheless alleged need for the continuous existence after death of a moral agent who is here undergoing a divine education is incapable of being disposed of in this way by scientific reasoning; for science, within its exclusive sphere of sensible things, is ignorant of the agency and moral government of persons. In the moral experience of the spiritual being I call *myself*, there may be signs that the organic change called Death is not the end of me and my conscious life. The issue of that event, it is true, lies within the veil beyond which present experience does not extend. But in

another view, the rising of the sun *to-morrow*, and the conscious life *after death* of a person who has not yet died, are both "beyond experience," and each must remain so till it has actually happened. Yet neither is beyond it, if the former can be shown to be rationally involved in our present physical, and the latter in our present moral and religious, experience.

The chief objections discussed in the 'Three Dialogues,' as well as others which have since been raised against all ideal realism, resolve themselves, I think, into an allegation of its covert scepticism—partial or universal. The material world, it is argued, cannot be concluded to be wholly unsubstantial and impotent without disastrous conclusions following. For mind-dependent matter logically involves—so it is assumed—the illusoriness of physical and mathematical science; and, when pushed intrepidly into its issues, it also obliges him who holds it to recognise himself as solitary in the universe,—an ego without companions. According to more uncompromising critics, it even involves the dissolution of all belief, and of all that exists, spirit as well as body, in the Pyrrhonism, or total scepticism, which can assert nothing about anything.

These objections are in a degree recognised and argued against in the 'Dialogues.' I will try to present them in their strength, with Berkeley's replies, at the point of view to which he had now attained.

A really ideal material world, dependent on percipient mind for the reality we all naturally attribute to things, implies, some might say, as many material worlds as there are percipient persons, or indeed as there are

numerically different perceptions of sensible things by each separate person. The things of sense can have no numerical identity; they and their laws must all be transitory mental phenomena. Even although I may so interpret the phenomena of which I am percipient in my senses, as to be able to predict phenomena of which I shall become percipient, and may thus form what I call physical science of the sense-given portion of my mental experience; and though the very things realised in seeing and feeling are thus the real things that exist, —still *such* so-called realities, it might be argued, *cannot* discharge the offices which Berkeley supposes his material world to discharge instrumentally, on behalf of the substantial and powerful world of spirits. He would have one end of its intelligible and interpretable existence to be—that of awakening, in persons who are percipient of sense phenomena, a reasonable belief in the existence of other finite persons, and in the eternal existence of God. But then the contents of Berkeley's material world, from their dependence on perceptions, seem to have only an intermittent and fragmentary, not a permanent and truly objective, existence. They exist only as more or less realised in living perception. On this conception of what Matter is, the tree that I see at a distance from me exists only while I (or some other person, if there *be* any other person) am actually looking at it; and even then only in the visible part of the aggregate of phenomena which we call its "qualities." For, when merely seen, its tangible qualities, and all its other qualities, are in abeyance. If "things" depend for their reality on sensuous perceptions, all their visible qualities must

relapse for the time into nonentity, when they are unseen by any one; and their tangible ones too, unless a percipient is always in conscious contact with every part of them. The force of this objection is aggravated to the imagination by the discoveries of modern science — for instance, in geology and astronomy. Thus it seems as if the world we see and touch could not have existed millions of years before men or other sentient beings began to perceive, as modern science proves that it did, if all that can be meant by its real existence is, that it is the living experience of persons; nor can it have the continuity which is presupposed in the modern conception of its changes as equivalent metamorphoses.[1]

This sort of objection to the new way of thinking about Matter was touched in Lady Percival's difficulty, already mentioned, and in Berkeley's reply—that he understands by the "creation" of visible and tangible things the rise or evolution of successive ideas, in natural order in a sentient experience.

The want of numerical sameness in the things we perceive, if things are only phenomena dependent on the perceptions of persons, is one of the difficulties urged by Hylas. "The same idea which is in my mind cannot be in yours or in any other mind," Hylas

[1] This is perhaps not enough kept in view in the chapter on Berkeley in Mr A. J. Balfour's 'Defence of Philosophic Doubt' —where the Berkeleyan conception of the material world is transformed into a conception of phenomena, viewed apart from supreme Intellect and Will as the constant constructive power. Also Mr J. S. Mill's "permanent possibility of sensation," and so-called "psychological idealism," is identified with Berkeley, although it is Berkeley with the Divine life and light put out.

objects. "Doth it not therefore follow," he concludes, "that no two persons can see the same thing?" And is not this highly absurd? To which Philonous ingeniously replies:—

"If the term 'same' be taken in the vulgar acceptation, it is certain (and not at all repugnant to the principles I maintain) that different persons *may* perceive the same thing, and the same thing or idea exist in different minds. Words are of arbitrary imposition; and since men are used to apply the term 'same' where no distinction or variety is perceived, and I do not pretend to alter their perceptions, it follows that, as men have said before, 'several saw the same thing,' so they may, upon like occasions, still continue to use the phrase, without any deviation either from propriety of language or the truth of things. But if the term 'same' be used in the acceptation of philosophers—who pretend to an abstracted notion of identity—then, according to their sundry definitions of this notion (for it is not yet agreed wherein that philosophic identity consists), it may or may not be possible for divers persons to perceive the same thing. But whether philosophers shall see fit to call a thing the same or no, is, I conceive, of small importance. Let us suppose several men together, all endued with the same faculties, and consequently affected in like sort by their senses, and who had yet never known the use of language, they would without question agree in their perceptions. Though, perhaps, when they came to the use of speech, some, regarding only the uniformness of what was perceived, might call it the *same* thing; others, especially regarding the diversity of persons who perceived, might choose the denomination of *different* things. But who sees not that all the dispute is about a word? to wit, whether what is perceived by different persons may yet have the term 'same' applied to it. Men may dispute about identity and diversity, without any real difference in their thoughts and opinions, abstracted from names."

Though Hylas was satisfied with this answer, other critics of ideal realism may still feel that Philonous has not got to the bottom of the question, and that he has failed to distinguish numerical identity from complete similarity. The sameness which consists in similarity is the only sameness which Berkeley recognises in things of sense. It follows that things, composed of ideas or phenomena exclusively, can only have an interrupted existence. But this is to regard his theory only on one side. Philonous accepts the common-sense conviction, in fact ineradicable, that the material world must have been in existence when human beings were not percipient, before human beings existed, and before the living experience of sentient beings. He gives his own explanation, however, of this common conviction. Without the explanation, his conception of matter would dissolve all sensible things into isolated phenomena, void of meaning and uninterpretable. The common conviction, he intends to say, really means the constant presence of God as the ground of the constitution of the sensible world; for without this it could neither become nor continue to be a real world. In short, the permanence and identity of the things we see and touch really means the persistent activity of Divine Providence in the heart of things. It is through this that they are substantiated; and it is through this that the regular order of the perceptions of each finite mind—that is, the order of the phenomena of which things consist, and of all experienced changes in things—is determined.

The world of sense, according to this account of it, has two sorts of reality—a phenomenal and a hyper-

phenomenal. As presented in sense, its reality must be conceived and spoken about in terms of sensuous perception and sensuous imagination. Hyper-phenomenally regarded, it has a continuous existence, in the ideal archetypes of the Divine Rational Will; but as such it cannot be seen or touched or fully realised. When Berkeley speaks about reality in sensible things, he usually refers only to what can be seen and touched, and represented in imagination: this, he says, consists of phenomena only, and is therefore dependent on sensuous perception and sentient life. The ideal archetypes in the Divine Intellect and Will, as invisible, intangible, and unpictureable, do not belong to the world of sense—the material world—in its common meaning. But as for the sensuous manifestations, these must be only as and when they are seen, touched, or otherwise realised by living percipients.

As to the objection that I must find myself alone in existence, without human companions, if Matter—as far as natural science is concerned—is only phenomena, Berkeley has not cleared up the difficulty. He hardly explains how a material world, constantly dependent on mind, is adequate to discharge the office of a reliable medium of intelligent and practical intercourse between otherwise private and solitary human beings. The question how intercommunion is possible without absolute numerical identity—not mere similarity—in the visible and tangible things of sense, hardly occurs to him. He is already full of the conviction that other persons exist contemporaneously with himself; and the sensible world is for him an object of interest chiefly as the medium of social intercourse between persons, and as a revelation of

God to men. But he rather *assumes* its adequacy for this office, as a dictum of ordinary common sense, than explains the consistency of the common sense assumption with a material world composed of phenomena, and thus dependent on living percipients for its actual existence; and he points to no sufficient way of escape from the absolute solitude of Panegoism. The explanation would have carried him further into the relations of Reason and Sense than he went, at least in the earlier stages. The omnipresence of Active Mind in nature was then less in his thoughts than the dependence of what is seen and touched, and also of the space in which we see and touch, upon living perception.

That the logical issue of the Berkeleyan paralysis of Matter and its powers is the impossibility of any scientific knowledge of nature, and also a lonely Panegoism, is only a part of its destructive issues, according to its bolder critics. The premises that unsubstantiate Matter, they would argue, unsubstantiate everything. If unperceived matter and force is unreal and absurd, because inconceivable, unconscious Spirit must be impossible and absurd too, because unrealisable in sense-perception. Supposed knowledge seems illusion, if living perception is indispensable to the reality of the material world. Are not the arguments for the unsubstantial and impotent character of the phenomenal things of sense good also against persistence and power in the Ego? If the material world can only be a system of phenomena dependent on mind for its actual existence, can spirit or mind be more than a series of perceptions, without a continuous and powerful self to substantiate and

sustain perceptions? Does not Berkeley's weapon against materialism and scepticism literally turn against himself, with suicidal effect? Was not the "visionist" who denied "his own" existence as well as that of Matter, only a more firm and consequent reasoner than Berkeley? If the "inconceivability" of a material world independent of living mind was a sufficient reason for assuming that the world we see must be absolutely dependent on a conscious Ego, must not the Ego too, for a like reason, dissolve into a succession of ever-perishing perceptions? Does not the personal pronoun "I" resolve itself into evanescent perceptions; and with it all existence, material, human, and Divine? Instead of the materialist extreme, at which all conscious states and acts are regarded as effects which mysteriously follow certain motions and collocations of atoms, — against which Berkeley revolted; and the ideal realist extreme, at which atoms and their motions are resolved into the significant and interpretable sensuous experience of spirits—which Berkeley accepted, both atoms and spirits seem now to disappear in a nihilism that puts an end alike to philosophy, and physical science, and common knowledge.

This objection, though not in all its strength, did occur to Berkeley, suggested perhaps by a passage in Locke:—

"'You admit,' Hylas objects,[1] in sentences introduced into the third edition of the 'Three Dialogues' in 1734—'you admit that there is a spiritual substance, although you have no idea of it, while you deny that there can be such a thing as a material substance, because you have no idea of it. Is

[1] Works, vol. i. pp. 327-329.

this fair dealing? to act consistently you must admit Matter or reject Spirit. What say you to this?'—'I say, in the first place,' replies Philonous, 'that I do not deny the existence of material substance, merely because I have no notion or idea of it. Many things, for aught I know, may exist whereof neither I nor any other man hath, or can have, any idea or notion whatever. But then those things must be possible—that is, nothing inconsistent must be included in their definition. I say, secondly, that although we believe things to exist which we do not perceive, yet we may not believe that any particular thing exists without some reason for such belief. But I have no reason for believing the existence of Matter. Whereas the being of Myself I immediately know by reflection.'—'Notwithstanding all you have said,' Hylas still objects, 'to me it seems that, according to your own way of thinking, and in consequence of your own principles, it should follow that "you" are only a system of fleeting ideas, without any substance to support them Words are not to be used, you say, without a meaning. And as there is no more meaning in spiritual substance than in material substance, the one ought to be exploded as well as the other.'—'How often,' retorts Philonous,—'how often must I repeat that I know and am conscious of my own being, and that I myself am not my own ideas, but somewhat else, a thinking active principle that perceives, knows, wills, and operates about ideas? . . . But I am not, in like manner, conscious of the existence and essence of Matter. On the contrary, I know that nothing inconsistent can exist, and that the existence of Matter [*i.e.*, as distinct from the existence of intelligible and interpretable sensuous phenomena] implies an inconsistency [*i.e.*, the existence of unphenomenal phenomena]. Further, I know what I mean when I affirm that there is a spiritual substance or support of ideas. . . . But I don't know what is meant when it is said that an unperceiving substance hath inherent in it and supports either ideas or [unperceiving and unperceived] archetypes of ideas. There is, therefore, on the whole, no parity of case between Spirit and Matter.'"

This is, on the whole, to say that, though we can reasonably affirm a material world that is real only in being perceived, we find in what we call "I" more than this sort of reality. For the personal pronoun legitimately carries a deeper meaning, and gives their only meaning to the otherwise empty words "substance" and "power," and its only complete meaning to the word "cause." The answer satisfied Hylas. It did not satisfy David Hume, who, soon after, in his 'Treatise of Human Nature,' read into Berkeley's ideal realism a Universal Scepticism, in which this reality of the Ego and of God was, along with Matter, suicidally dissolved in a confession of universal meaninglessness, and unattainability of any reasonable experience.

"There are some philosophers," says Hume,[1] "who imagine that we are every moment conscious of what we call our SELF; that we feel its existence, and its continuance in existence. . . . For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call 'myself,' I always stumble at some particular perception or other. I can never observe anything but the perception. When my perceptions are removed for a time, as in sound sleep, so long I am insensible myself, and may truly be said not to exist. . . . Setting aside some metaphysicians, I may venture to affirm of the rest of mankind that they are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed one another with inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement."

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[1] 'Treatise of Human Nature,' B. I., Pt. i., sect. 6. But compare this with the relative remarks in the Appendix to Part III. (pp. 300, 305, in vol. iii., ed. 1740)—a remarkable passage which almost posits Kant's problem.

The need for Active Reason as the Universal Power is treated by Hume as a dogma, instead of the indispensable postulate of experience. He denies our right to assume that a "cause"—that is, a caused or secondary cause, which is the only sort of cause he recognises — must be "sufficient," according to any notion we can form of sufficiency to produce certain effects; for "effects" are known only as invariable consequences; and these are to be found by experience, apart from *a priori* conceptions of what the antecedent phenomena are or are not "sufficient" to cause. Causation is only constant conjunction, in the universal phenomenalism of Hume: we can never find an *a priori* reason why "anything may not produce anything"; and therefore why the ideas or phenomena we call Matter may not cause the ideas or phenomena we call Mind. If we see constant conjunction between conscious life and organised matter, they reason hastily, he would say, who conclude—from a dogmatic assumption of "insufficiency" in the cause, as to which we can affirm nothing—that it is impossible that motion can produce thought, or that a different position of atoms can give rise to a different emotion or volition; while from experience "we may certainly conclude that motion actually is the cause of thought and perception."

It was thus that Hume, years afterwards, carried Berkeley's war against abstractions forward from the world that is presented to the senses into the spiritual world, and, dismissing all "substances" and "powers," virtually dissolved existence into unsubstantial and impotent phenomena, emptied of Active Omnipresent Intelligence. If, as Hume did, and as the critics and the

historians of philosophy have since done, the constructive or spiritual side of Berkeley's philosophy is left out of account, and if the Eternal Reason which shines through the phenomena of sense and sensible things—even in his earlier but chiefly in his later thought—is made no account of, it is easy to show that a universe of transitory sensations only can be no world at all. They make only an uninterpretable chaos, perhaps occasionally coexistent and connected, but in which the personal pronouns "I" and "you" have no right to appear.

That Berkeley made Sense and Custom more prominent than Reason or Intellect in the juvenile books which issued so impetuously from Trinity College; and that those books, more accommodated than his latest work to the course of thought in Europe in the last century, were treated as his final word, may explain the one-sided representation of his philosophy which has long been accepted. But it is time that it should be conceived in its fulness, and that we should recognise the "fruits" of his "later growth," as well as his "first-fruits," presented at "the altar of truth."

Meantime we must follow him in romantic wanderings through many lands, but still connected officially with Trinity College.

CHAPTER VII.

ENGLAND, FRANCE, AND ITALY: DE MOTU.

EARLY in January 1713, Berkeley, still full of his discovery of the unsubstantiality and impotence of matter, and its constant dependence on God, found his way from Dublin to London, emerging for the first time from his "obscure corner." The College leave of absence given to him says that it was on the ground of "health," which may have suffered from the impetuous ardour expended in the 'Essay on Vision,' the 'Treatise on Human Knowledge,' and the 'Three Dialogues.' In a letter to Sir John Percival[1] from London, a few days after he got there, he says that he had crossed the Channel "to print his new book of Dialogues, and to make acquaintance with men of merit, rather than to engage the interests of those in power." He describes the adventures of his journey, and gives his first impressions of the new country, enlarging, with a genuine feeling for nature in all its softer aspects, on the extraordinary beauty of rural England even in winter, which he liked better than anything he saw in London.

His good-natured erratic countryman, Richard Steele,

[1] January 26, 1713—Percival MSS.

was among the first to welcome him on his arrival. In that same January letter, from the "Pall Mall Coffee-House in the Pall Mall," he mentions a meeting with Steele, and soon after he writes again that he dines often with him in Bloomsbury Square, "where he has a good house, table, servants, and coach. Somebody had given him my Treatise on Human Knowledge, and that was the ground of his inclination to my acquaintance. You will soon hear of him under the character of the 'Guardian': he designs his paper should come out every day, as the 'Spectator.'" This was the house in Bloomsbury Square, "much finer, larger, and grander" than the one Steele formerly had in Jermyn Street, for which he could not pay; or than another at Hampton, on which he had borrowed money, and which poor Steele with his "Dear Prue" had taken in 1712—where his unhappy landlord "got no better satisfaction than his friend in St James's," and where it is recorded that "Dick, giving a grand entertainment, had half-a-dozen men in livery to wait upon his noble guests, and confessed that his servants were bailiffs to a man."[1]

In this first summer in England, Berkeley wrote several essays in the 'Guardian,' mostly sarcastic squibs against materialistic Free-thinkers. Although his ideal realism is hardly perceptible in these papers, they show the direction in which he would apply the new conception of Matter, more evident twenty years after, when he engaged in controversy with materialistic Free-thinkers in a more systematic way.

This disposition may have been produced partly by recollection of the old Toland controversies in Dublin,

[1] See Thackeray's 'English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century.'

but it was now strengthened by the appearance of Anthony Collins's 'Discourse of Free-Thinking,' shortly after his own arrival in London. We are less able than we should like to be to reproduce Collins as he lived and thought, for no sufficient biography of this remarkable man has been written. He was a barrister, born of a good Essex family, who in 1713 was talked about in town, especially in the ecclesiastical world, on account of his "Discourse," most of which reads rather commonplace to-day. Ten years before, this Essex gentleman was in affectionate correspondence and companionship with Locke, then at Lady Masham's at Oates, in the last years of Locke's life. The aged author of the 'Essay,' and of the 'Letters on Toleration,' found himself wonderfully in sympathy with his young friend. He praised his love of truth and moral courage as superior to almost any he had ever known, and by his Will he made him one of his executors. Soon after Locke's death, Collins got involved in ecclesiastical disputes, which made him conceive a strong antipathy to the clergy. He supported Dodwell against Clarke by clever reasonings, which Swift has preserved for ridicule in Martinus Scriblerus. In 1709 he wrote against priestcraft, and assailed King, the Archbishop of Dublin, for his discourse on divine predestination and foreknowledge. Collins is remembered now by historians of philosophy for his controversy with Samuel Clarke about necessity and the moral agency of man, in which he states the arguments against human freedom from natural necessity with a logical force unsurpassed by any contemporary. In the 'Discourse of Free-Thinking' he assailed priests, and believers in church religion, as

enemies of honest philosophical inquiry, and the paid advocates of a foregone conclusion. The exclusive claim to freedom of research and candour, made by Collins and others of his school on their own behalf, roused Berkeley's indignation. Now, and afterwards in the deistical and atheistical polemics of his middle life, he appeared as a free-thinking antagonist of free-thinking materialists and fatalists. There must be belief of some sort at the root of human life—for to live is by implication to believe something; and he could not, he professed, find more candour and reason in a negative creed than in religious faith.

His countryman, Swift, was one of Berkeley's patrons in this first visit to London, as well as his countryman Steele. On an April Sunday in 1713 we find him at Kensington, at the Court of Queen Anne, in the company of Swift. "I went to Court to-day," Swift's journal of that Sunday records, "on purpose to present Mr Berkeley, one of our fellows of Trinity College, to Lord Berkeley of Stratton. That Mr Berkeley is a very ingenious man and great philosopher, and I have mentioned him to all the Ministers, and have given them some of his writings, and I will favour him as much as I can." After that his name appears often in the Stella journal. Swift was as good as his word in helping him into the London world of letters, in the last year of the reign of Queen Anne, so that he became known as he deserved to "men of merit," and was brought into contact with others on whom he would hardly have conferred this title. He told a friend long afterwards that he used to attend one of the free-thinking clubs, in the pretended character of a learner, and that he there heard

Anthony Collins say that he was able to demonstrate the impossibility of God's existence—whatever Collins may have meant by what he said. The promised "demonstration," Berkeley added, was afterwards in part published, in Collins's 'Philosophical Inquiry concerning Human Liberty,' which appeared in 1717, where he argues that every action attributed to man, as well as all else that appears in the universe, must be the issue of Fate or causal necessity. This might be interpreted as an attempt to demonstrate atheism, unless "God" is a synonym for Fate.

Swift had now been living in London for more than four years, in his "lodging in Bury Street," absorbed in the political intrigues of the last years of Queen Anne, and sending the daily journal to Stella, in Dublin, which so faithfully preserves the incidents of those years. Mrs Vanhomrigh and her daughter, the unhappy "Vanessa," were settled near him in their house in the same street, and there, as he writes to Stella, he "loitered hot and lazy after his morning's work," and often "dined out of mere listlessness." This Vanhomrigh connection had its effect on Berkeley's fortunes long afterwards.

In the same summer of 1713, Pope, hardly twenty-five years of age, was at Binfield, among the glades of Windsor, but not seldom with Addison in the favourite coffee-house kept by Button near Covent Garden. Addison himself was in St James's Place, for a time withdrawn from politics, giving literary breakfasts, preparing 'Cato,' and essays for the 'Spectator' and the 'Guardian' which charmed the world. In a letter to Sir John Percival from "Pall Mall," written soon after

his arrival in London,[1] Berkeley mentions that the night before, "a very ingenious new poem upon Windsor Forest" was given to him "by the author, Mr Pope, a Papist, but a man of excellent wit and learning. Mr Addison," he goes on to say, "has the same talents as Steele, in a high degree, and is likewise a great philosopher, having applied himself to the speculative studies more than any other of the wits here I know. I breakfasted with him at Dr Swift's lodgings in Bury Street. His coming when I was there, and the good temper he showed, I construed as a sign of an approaching coalition of parties. Dr Swift is admired by both Steele and Addison, and I think Addison one of the best-natured and most agreeable men in the world. 'Cato,' a most noble play of his, and the only one he writ, is to be acted in Easter Week." Accordingly, from a subsequent letter, on the 18th of April, we learn that, "on Tuesday last 'Cato' was acted for the first time. I was present with Mr Addison and two or three more friends, in a side box, where we had a table, and two or three flasks of Burgundy and champagne, with which the author (who is a sober man) thought it necessary to support his spirits, and indeed it was a pleasant refreshment between the acts. Some parts of the prologue, written by Mr Pope, a Tory and even a Papist, were hissed, being thought to savour of Whiggism, but the clap got much the better of the hiss. Lord Harley, who sat in the box next us, was observed to clap as loud as any in the house all the time of the play." Swift and Pope have both given us their account of the first night of 'Cato': here for the first time we have Berkeley's.

[1] March 7, 1713—Percival MSS.

In the same week he mentions that he "dined at Dr Arbuthnot's lodgings in the Queen's Palace at Kensington," and that "he was the first proselyte he had made of the treatise ['The Three Dialogues'] he had come over from Dublin to print, and which will soon be published." Arbuthnot, the Aberdonian physician at the Court of the Queen, was a well-known leader in the Scriblerus Club, and a witty assailant of the verbal metaphysics of the schools.

Percival writes from Dublin in May that he hears the book of 'Dialogues' is printed, though not yet published; that its spiritual philosophy is gaining ground among the learned, as it becomes better understood; that Mr Addison is coming over to the new opinion; and that what seemed shocking at first is now become so familiar that many envy him the discovery of the secret of Matter, and would fain make it their own. "You have now, too," he adds, "an opportunity of gratifying one piece of curiosity I have heard you very inquisitive about—I mean, the surprise of a person born blind when first made to see. One Grant, an oculist, has put forth an advertisement of his art in this way, with whom I believe you would find satisfaction in discoursing."[1]

In the course of this summer, at the instance of Addison, it seems that a meeting was arranged between Berkeley and Samuel Clarke, then the metaphysical rector of St James's in Piccadilly, whose objections he had in vain tried to draw forth three years before through Sir John Percival. Berkeley's fascination of manner and goodness of heart had charmed the world of London, and Atterbury after an interview with him could

[1] See Berkeley's 'Works,' vol. i. (Clarendon Press ed.)

say—"So much understanding, so much knowledge, so much innocence, and such humility, I did not think had been the portion of any but angels, till I saw this gentleman." Still, the young Irishman's new conception of the material world was misinterpreted and ridiculed by the London wits, who translated it into the madman's paradox, that all we see and touch is a meaningless dream. Much was hoped from this meeting with Clarke, but it ended without a common understanding, and Berkeley had again to complain that though Clarke had neither refuted his arguments nor disproved his premisses, he had not the candour to accept his conclusion.

Immaterialism, however, was springing up spontaneously in other quarters. In a letter to Percival, in June, Berkeley mentions a "clergyman in Wiltshire, who has produced a book in which he advances something published three years ago in my treatise concerning the true Principles of Human Knowledge." The allusion is to Arthur Collier's 'Clavis Universalis, or New Inquiry after Truth; being a Demonstration of the Non-existence or Impossibility of an External World.' This curious little volume appeared in London early in the summer of 1713, full of acute arguments cogitated by its retired and studious author, in the peaceful seclusion of a rural English parsonage not far from Salisbury. It was overlooked in Britain (but not in Germany) till Reid called attention to it in his "Essays," seventy years after it was published.[1] Long extremely scarce, it is now accessible, in two editions, published in 1836 and 1837. Collier, with much argumentative subtlety, is wanting in imaginative sentiment, and in

[1] See Hamilton's 'Reid,' p. 287, and note.

that sense of the relation of ideal realism to the philosophy of religion, and to other sides of human life, which, along with an artistic beauty of conception and expression, have enabled Berkeley to affect the main current of human thought. Their intellectual points of view were different. Berkeley started with that love of experience, and aversion to the "vermiculate questions of the schools," in which he had been trained by Locke. Collier argued rather from the abstract assumptions of the cloister, in the spirit of a schoolman who was infected with the mysticism of Malebranche and Norris. The coincidence is, nevertheless, curious. Berkeley at least cannot have borrowed from Collier, who alludes in the 'Clavis' to the 'Treatise on Human Knowledge,' but also tells us that as early as 1703 he had reached a similar conclusion for himself. The coincidence shows the existence of something in the intellectual atmosphere at the time favourable to the new way of thinking about the world of which we are percipient in the senses. Collier, like Berkeley, sought the judgment of Samuel Clarke about his reasonings, and was able to draw from him "a learned and civil answer," which unfortunately has been lost.[1]

The Percival correspondence informs us for the first time that Berkeley spent two months of this summer in Oxford, and that he found it "a most delightful place." "Grand performances," he writes to Percival, "have been going on at the Sheldonian Theatre, and a great concourse were at the Act, from London and

[1] See Benson's 'Memoirs of the Rev. Arthur Collier' (1837), pp. 33-41.

the country, amongst whom were several foreigners, particularly about thirty Frenchmen of the ambassador's company, who, it is reported, were all robbed by a single highwayman." It is interesting to find that Oxford had thus early taken possession of Berkeley's imagination: this was his first visit to the place which, forty years after, in a fit of academical idealism, became the chosen retreat of his old age. His new realism was not forgotten by him at Oxford. "As to what you write of Dr Arbuthnot not being of my opinion," he writes thence to Percival in August, "it is true there has been some difference between us, concerning some notions relating to the necessity of the laws of nature; but this does not touch the main point of the non-existence of what philosophers call material substance, against which he has acknowledged he can assert nothing." Though it "does not touch the main point," one would gladly have heard more about what seems to have touched Berkeley's favourite conception of the dependence and arbitrariness of the laws of nature, as opposed to the independence and absolute necessity of the laws and properties of the material world, which some men of science are ready to take for granted. The nature and origin of natural law, raised by Berkeley, is one of the chief problems at the root of all the natural sciences.

So Berkeley's first spring and summer in England passed away. He spent the following winter in France and Italy.

In October he wrote to Percival that he was "on the eve of leaving London, and going to Sicily as chaplain

to Lord Peterborough, who is going ambassador-extraordinary on the coronation of the king." He was thus, on the recommendation of Swift, associated with the most striking figure amongst the political personages of that generation, who, as it happened, had a quarter of a century before been familiar with Locke when they were both exiles in Holland, and afterwards one of his correspondents and visitors at Oates. He was now the friend of Swift and Pope and Berkeley. Ten months with Peterborough in France and Italy was a fresh experience of life to the fervid and ingenious youth, who had been viewed with curious interest by the wits of London. He left his new thought about Matter to work its way at home among those who were inclined to think, and turned an eager inquiring eye to nature and art on the continent of Europe. Through his letters to Sir John Percival we can follow him on his journey. Writing from Paris in November, he describes his adventures, and some of his companions on the road—among others, "a Scotch gentleman named Martin, who wrote about St Kilda,"[1] and he adds, "The Abbé D'Aubigné is to introduce me to-morrow to Father Malebranche." Berkeley was a month in Paris; but we hear no more about Malebranche. On New Year's Day he crossed Mont Cenis, in a storm of snow, and made Leghorn his headquarters till May, while Peterborough was in Sicily. In July he was again in Paris, on his way home. In August he returned to London. It was the month in which the whole outlook of English

[1] This was Murdoch Martin, a native of Skye, author of a 'Voyage to St Kilda' (1698), and a 'Description of the Western Islands of Scotland' (1703).

politics had been changed by the death of Queen Anne.

The two next years were spent in London, with congenial retreats now and then to rural scenes in the midland and southern counties. The Percival correspondence at this time refers to the rising in Scotland under Mar, the outcome of a course of political intrigues intended to dethrone George the First and to set aside the Protestant succession. Another subject was the efforts of Berkeley's friends to find preferment for him in the Irish Church. A groundless suspicion of Jacobitism, caused by some misinterpreted expressions in some sermons on "Passive Obedience," delivered in 1712 in Trinity College Chapel, perhaps strengthened by the Cavalier traditions of his name, was not overcome even by the interest of Caroline, the philosophical Princess of Wales, the friend of Clarke and Butler, and the correspondent of Leibniz. In June 1716, Charles Dering, Percival's cousin, wrote from Dublin that, after all that had been done by friends, his prospects there were bad, as "the Lords Justices had made a strong representation against him." He had no encouragement to return to Ireland.

In November 1716, accordingly, we find him with leave of absence from Trinity College, and again on his way to Italy, where he spent the four following years. Ashe, the Bishop of Clogher, Swift's friend, by whom Berkeley had been admitted to holy orders nine years before, had, it seems, persuaded him to accompany his son on a tour as his travelling tutor.

It was about this time that the two most famous contemporary metaphysicians passed away. Malebranche died at Paris in October 1715, and Leibniz died at Hanover in November 1716. Berkeley was thus left in a front place—with Samuel Clarke and Anthony Collins in England, Buffier and Huet in France, Le Clerc in Holland, and Vico in Italy, as his most distinguished companions. Butler, Hutcheson, and Wolf were still unknown, and Shaftesbury was dead.

The historians of philosophy have associated Berkeley with the death of Malebranche in a tragical way. "It forms an interesting circumstance in the history of these two memorable persons," according to Dugald Stewart, "that they had once, and only once, the pleasure of a short interview. The conversation, we are told, turned on the non-existence of matter. Malebranche, who had an inflammation in his lungs, and whom Berkeley found preparing a medicine in his cell, and cooking it in a small pipkin, exerted his voice so violently in the heat of their dispute that he increased his disorder, which carried him off a few days after. It is impossible not to regret," Stewart adds, "that of this interview there is no other record; or rather, that Berkeley had not made it the groundwork of one of his own Dialogues. Fine as his imagination was, it could scarcely have added to the picturesque effect of the real scene."[1] I fear that facts must henceforward make this celebrated story take its place among myths, for I find

[1] Stewart's "Dissertation" ('Works,' vol. i. p. 161, Hamilton's Edition). See also Stock's Life of Berkeley (prefixed to the old editions of Berkeley's Works); 'Biog. Brit.,' art. "Berkeley"; and Advocat's 'Dict. Hist.' There is a version of the story by De Quincey. in his essay on "Murder considered as one of the Fine Arts."

from the Percival Correspondence that Berkeley was in England throughout 1715, the year in which Malebranche died. The only evidence that he ever saw the eloquent French idealist is the allusion to the promised introduction through the Abbé D'Aubigné, two years before.

The philosophical doctrines of Malebranche and Berkeley about Matter have so much superficial resemblance, that the story of their tragical interview not unnaturally grew out of it. Berkeley, as we have already seen, disavowed community with the French Father in his own new thought about the material world, and even maintained that no principles regarding the question were more opposed to his than those of Malebranche. The theory of Malebranche about matter was a development of the Cartesian theory of causation in a universe of matter and spirit. For, according to Descartes, our sensations are not produced by active material substance, but by the constant and immediate agency of God; who makes us conscious of the appropriate perceptions, on occasion of correlative extra-organic changes, which, also by divine agency, affect our organism. This, no doubt, presupposes the existence of extra-organic matter, and its divinely communicated power of affecting the human body; but it also implies that perceptions corresponding to the organic affections can be caused only by Supreme Mind, and not by a derived power in matter. Such was the famed Cartesian theory of occasional causation through divine assistance. Malebranche merely relieved it of an excrescence. Instead of sense perceptions produced in human minds by a constant divine agency inherent

in extended things, he seems to have believed that we participate, through the Universal Reason, in the very archetypal Ideas of the sensible world that are ever present in the mind of God, in whom all finite spirits live and have their intelligent being. We all exist in God, thought Malebranche, and in this way we can become actually conscious of His Ideas, as involved in the constitution of sensible things. Instead of supposing numerically different material phenomena, present in each percipient spirit, as Berkeley was logically obliged to do, Malebranche found the same divine archetypal Ideas revealed in the common perceptions of men, who, on occasion of sense, rise into an apprehension of the Intelligible World, which the sensible one only dimly adumbrates. In this theory, as in Berkeley's, though for different reasons, unrealised independent Matter, if not absolutely meaningless, is at least useless. Berkeley, perhaps, exaggerated their differences. In both there is the tendency to view the world of the senses as a superficial show, which resolves into phenomena, and reveals Eternal Mind as the true reality. But in Malebranche's view, human agents are lost in God. He thus approaches Spinozism, from which Berkeley was kept back by conviction of the spiritual individuality that is involved in our moral and immoral agency. Berkeley reduces things of sense to ideas, but not persons.

Berkeley's 'Italian Journal,' first published in 1871,[1] and his correspondence with Lord Percival, since then discovered, enable us to follow his movements in 1717

[1] See Berkeley's 'Collected Works' (Clarendon Press edition).

more continuously and distinctly than in any other year of his life. Interest in travel had for the time superseded metaphysical controversy with materialism —fervid interest in outward nature, art, and human life. He was undergoing an education supplementary to that of Trinity College, with which he was still officially connected. We see him at Rome in January and February, at Naples throughout April and May, and in the fairyland of Ischia in autumn. In 1718 most of the letters are dated at Rome, where medals and statues, pictures and architecture, filled his fancy. In architecture he thought "the old Romans inferior to the Greeks, and the moderns infinitely short of both, in grandeur, and simplicity, and taste." His strong sense of natural beauty appears in his descriptions of Italy, and especially of his favourite isle of Ischia. His new principles lead to recognition in the world of the senses of "something far more deeply interfused, whose dwelling is the light of setting suns, and the round ocean, and the living air."

In 1719 Berkeley again disappears from view. An allusion in one of his letters shows that this was the year in which he made a pedestrian tour through Calabria and Sicily. He was particularly interested in Sicily, and collected materials for a natural history of the island, which were lost along with other manuscripts on the passage to Naples. In the summer of the following year we find him on his way back to England. "I hope we shall be in London before the cold weather comes on," he wrote from Florence in July to Lord Percival. "I have indeed been detained

so long, against my expectations and wishes, on this side of the Alps, that I have lost all patience. Every month these six months we have designed to begin our journey home, and have been as often disappointed." Later in the year he was with his pupil at Lyons. About the end of 1720 he reached London.

Berkeley had now been away from Ireland for eight years, and in circumstances less favourable to continued meditation than when he was at Trinity College. But the charms of nature and art, and intercourse with "men of merit," had not withdrawn from his mind the new thought about the real nature of the things of sense, which had so early transformed his habitual way of looking at life and the external world. The 'Treatise on the Principles of Human Knowledge' was avowedly an unfinished book when it appeared in 1710. A Second Part was then promised, but it never came: the 'Three Dialogues' were meantime offered to the world instead. He seemed to have abandoned the original design of the "Treatise," and his readers and critics have forgotten that it professes to be only a fragment. A lately discovered letter of his, written in Rhode Island ten years after his return from Italy, proves that there was no abandonment; and indeed we may infer from what he says there that a "Second Part" of the 'Treatise on Human Knowledge' was the first-fruit of his studies after he left his native island in 1713. This letter is besides instructive, as an expression of his own view of the three books which were the first fruit of his early philosophical

studies in Ireland, prepared before he was thirty years of age.

"What you have seen of mine," he writes,[1] "was published when I was very young, and without doubt hath many defects. For, though the notions should be true (as I verily think they are), yet it is difficult to express them clearly and consistently, language being framed to common use and received prejudices. I do not therefore pretend that my books can teach truth. All I hope for is that they may be an occasion to inquisitive men of discovering truth, by consulting their own minds, and looking into their own thoughts. As to the Second Part of my Treatise concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge, the fact is that I had made a considerable progress in it, but the manuscript was lost during my travels in Italy; and I never had leisure since to do so disagreeable a thing as writing twice on the same subject."

What the "subject" of the Second Part of the "Principles" was we are left to conjecture. But we know that Berkeley did not pass through France, on his way home in 1720, without showing that his mind was still given to the favourite thought of his first years of philosophical authorship. A prize essay on the "Cause of Motion" had been proposed by the French Royal Academy. The subject was in the line of Berkeley's three juvenile treatises, which had converged in maintaining the unsubstantiality and impotence of all material things. He accordingly prepared in Italy a Latin dissertation, *De Motu*, which was finished at Lyons on his way to England, and published after his return to London. Whether it was ever presented to the

[1] See Dr Beardsley's 'Life and Correspondence of Samuel Johnson, D.D.,' pp. 71, 72 (New York, 1874).

Academy is uncertain. The prize at any rate was conferred on Crousaz, a well-known logician and professor at Lausanne. Berkeley's dissertation shows the bent of his thought about this time. The unsubstantiality of Matter is left more in the background. Its impotence is what he insists on, and the intellectual need for the free originative agency that is found only in Spirit or active Reason. *Mens agitat molem* might be the motto of the *De Motu.* He argues—with more dependence, too, on authorities, ancient and medieval, than in his earlier books—that the rational and voluntary activity of Supreme Mind, and subordinately of free finite agents, must be the originating cause of all changes in sensible phenomena. Natural law, or physical causation, is therefore not real causation, but is only the divinely directed effect of the constant orderly acting of Supreme Spiritual Power. To represent natural science as only the discovery of divinely maintained laws of change in sense-presented phenomena; and to conclude that even ambient space, so far as the term space has any positive meaning, is only established coexistence of sense impressions, having no independent existence of its own,—was perhaps too foreign to the prejudices of natural philosophers and mathematicians to find favour in the French Academy. The ordinary good sense of the unspeculative Crousaz was more likely to be acceptable.

This Latin tractate on the original cause of Motion in the material world was Berkeley's last essay in philosophy for many years. Events in England after his arrival turned his enthusiasm for a time in a new direction, which gave character to his thoughts and energies

in middle life. Its first period terminates with the European travel during seven years of leave of absence from Trinity College, which, as it were, completed his education, and with the publication of the *De Motu*, in which his early authorship characteristically culminates.

PERIOD II.—1720-1734.

CHAPTER I.

SOCIAL IDEALISM AND AMERICA.

On his return from Italy, Berkeley found the nation plunged into the agitation and misery that followed the failure of the South Sea scheme. He set himself, accordingly, with his usual impetuosity, but now with a direct practical purpose, to find ways of relief for the social and economical difficulties of the time in England. He was shocked by the prevailing tone of social morals. He seemed to see himself living in a generation indifferent to lofty ideals, among whom the extreme of selfish secularism had superseded the fanatical spiritualism of the preceding age. He was in collision with the bad elements of the eighteenth century. A commercial crisis had brought the evils to the surface. His ever-active imagination and eager temperament probably exaggerated the symptoms. It found vent in 1721 in a fervid 'Essay towards Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain.'

The 'Essay' was a lamentation over the corrupt civilisation of England—by an ardent social idealist, who

was ready to compare what he found at home with his experience of life in other lands. We are undone, he seems to say, and lost to all sense of our true interest. If we are to escape at all, it can only be by the persons who compose the nation becoming individually industrious, frugal, public-spirited, and religious. This, and not any royal road, is the way to the salvation of the country. Sumptuary laws might perhaps do something; masquerades might be prohibited; the theatre, which had been a school for taste and morals and experience of life to the ancients, and to the England of Shakespeare a century earlier, might perhaps be reformed; art might be made, as in other countries and ages, to inspire men with great thoughts and unworldly feelings. But till selfishness and sensuality were superseded in the community by public spirit, and atheism by religious trust and reverence, the case seemed hopeless. In the South Sea disaster he saw not the root of the social disorder, but only one of many symptoms, all foreshadowing social dissolution.

Though the few pages of this eloquent tract reveal no new thought in philosophy, they are important as a revelation of their author, and a forecast of his career in middle life. This was the first distinct symptom of that philanthropic endeavour towards the realisation of a state of society nearer his own pure and lofty ideal, which is thereafter manifest in what Berkeley wrote and did. We now hear for the first time the Cassandra wail of a sorrowful prophet, who soon after turned his eye of hope to other regions, in which a nearer approach to Utopia might be found.

On his return from Italy in 1720 he spent some

months in London. Addison had passed away two years before, Swift was in Dublin, and Steele, broken in health and fortune, was in retirement in the country. But Pope invited him to Twickenham, Arbuthnot was to be found in London, and Atterbury at his deanery in Westminster, or in his country retreat at Bromley. Clarke was still preaching sermons on philosophical theology in St James's in Piccadilly. Sherlock was Master of the Temple, and Butler was delivering sombre moral dissertions in the Rolls Chapel.

In autumn Berkeley appeared, after an absence of eight years, in his academic home in Trinity College. The architectural Earl of Burlington had recommended him to the Duke of Grafton, the newly-appointed Lord-Lieutenant. He was in his thirty-seventh year when he returned to his college, to await some preferment in the Irish Church.[1] This was not to satisfy ambition, but in order to realise a dream of learned leisure, combined with active philanthropy. "I had no sooner set foot on shore," he wrote to Lord Percival from Dublin in October, "than I heard that the deanery of Dromore was vacant, with £500 a-year and a sinecure —a circumstance that recommends it to me beyond any preferment in the kingdom, though there are some deaneries of twice that value." Lord Percival used his interest with the Duke. In February his patent passed the great seal. A tedious lawsuit interposed, for the bishop of the diocese claimed the nomination. With

[1] He tells Lord Percival soon after his arrival that he "wrote the Latin inscription on the king's equestrian statue," which had been uncovered a few days before.

characteristic eagerness Berkeley employed "eight lawyers," being assured that "the expense will be several hundreds, and that against one in possession of the deanery, who has been practised in lawsuits for twenty-five years." Twelve months after this he was again in London for weeks, "to see friends and to inform himself on some points of law which are not so well known in Ireland." He was nearly lost on this occasion in crossing to Holyhead.

A signal enterprise of romantic benevolence which had somehow fired his imagination now became a chief spring of action. It was thus described in March 1723, in a letter from London to Lord Percival who was then at Bath:—

"It is now about ten months since I have determined to spend the residue of my days in Bermuda, where I trust in Providence I may be the mean instrument of doing great good to mankind. . . . The reformation of manners among the English in our Western plantations, and the propagation of the Gospel among the American savages, are two points of high moment. The natural way of doing this is by founding a college or seminary in some convenient part of the West Indies, where the English youth of our Plantations may be educated in such sort as to supply their churches with pastors of good morals and good learning—a thing (God knows) much wanted. In the same seminary a number of young American savages may also be educated till they have taken the degree of Master of Arts. And being by that time well instructed in the Christian religion, practical mathematics, and other liberal arts and sciences, and early imbued with public-spirited principles and in-

clinations, they may become the fittest instruments for spreading religion, morals, and civil life among their countrymen, who can entertain no suspicion or jealousy of men of their own blood and language, as they might do of English missionaries, who can never be well qualified for that work." He next goes on to describe his plans of education for American savages, gives his reasons for choosing the Bermudas for the college, and presents the bright vision of an academic home in those fair Summer Isles of the West, whose idyllic bliss poets had sung, and from which Christian civilisation might now be made to radiate over the vast continent of America, with its magnificent possibilities in the future history of the race of man. He sees before him, under a halo of romance, a western Arcadia with its constant spring, nature in its gentlest moods, verdant fields and groves of palms and cool ocean breezes; a people of simple manners, and without the temptations which turn men away from academic pursuits; and all so placed geographically as to be fitted to spread religion and learning, in a spiritual commerce, over a new world.

We are left to conjecture the origin in Berkeley's imagination of this bright vision. According to his own account, it had arisen ten months before he wrote this letter,—our earliest intimation of it. That carries us back to his first months at Trinity College, after his long absence in Italy, when his heart was still full of the social revelations that followed the South Sea disaster. That it was despair about Great Britain which led him to look westward for the future course of Christian empire and civilisation one cannot affirm; but

we know at least that his thoughts were already diverted from more speculative questions about Matter, Space, Time, and Motion, to pressing problems of human life in society. America was then, for the philanthropic imagination, what Asia and Africa are now. The growth of American empire since — and of Britain too, whose recuperative power Berkeley underrated in his 'Essay'—might well have filled the prophetic imagination of a seer to whose vision was disclosed a future history of mankind under the guidance of the Anglo-Saxon race. Berkeley seemed to see a better Republic than Plato's, and a grander Utopia than More's, as the issue of his ideal university in those Summer Isles of which Waller had sung.

This social vision did not divert him from the lawsuit, which indeed was undertaken only to help the realisation of the vision. In May 1724 it was still undecided, but, through the good offices of Lady Percival, a more valuable preferment was then conferred upon him. "Yesterday," he writes, "I received my patent for the best deanery in this kingdom, that of Derry. It is said to be worth £1500 per annum, but I do not consider it with a view to enriching myself. I shall be perfectly contented if it facilitates and recommends my scheme of Bermuda."

In the meantime a curious fortune had favoured him. Swift's unhappy Vanessa, last encountered by us in Bury Street in 1713, was now settled on her property at Marley Abbey, ten miles from Dublin, after the death of her mother, Mrs Vanhomrigh, in 1717. Swift in the meantime had privately married Stella, as she confessed to Vanessa, who thereupon revoked the bequest of her

fortune to Swift, and left her whole estate to be divided between Berkeley (whom she knew only by report) and Mr Marshall, afterwards an Irish judge. The unhappy lady died broken-hearted in May 1723. A few days afterwards Berkeley wrote to Lord Percival: "Here is something that will surprise your lordship, as it doth me. Mrs Hester Vanhomrigh, a lady to whom I was a perfect stranger, having never in the whole course of my life exchanged a word with her, died on Sunday night. Yesterday her Will was opened, by which it appears that I am constituted executor, the advantage whereof is computed by those who understand her affairs to be worth £3000;—if a suit she had be carried, it will be considerably more. . . . I know not what your thoughts are on the long account I sent you from London to Bath of my Bermuda scheme, which is now stronger on my mind than ever, this providential event having made many things easy in my private affairs which were otherwise before." Lord Percival in his reply concluded that he would "now persist more than ever in the thoughts of settling in Bermuda, and prosecute that noble scheme, which, if favoured by our Court, may," he added, "in some time exalt your name beyond that of St Xavier or the most famous missionaries abroad." He warned him, however, that "without the protection of Government" he would have to encounter insurmountable difficulties in the West.

The Vanessa legacy and the obstructions to a settlement were the themes of a rather tiresome correspondence with his friend Tom Prior, in 1724 and the three following years. It illustrates points in Berkeley's character,

but has now no other interest. The debts of Vanessa absorbed much of the fortune. "I am still likely to make £2000 clear," he writes,[1] "not reckoning on the lawsuit depending between the executors and Mrs Partington. As to the deanery of Dromore, I despair of seeing it end to my advantage. The truth is, my fixed purpose of going to Bermuda sets me above soliciting anything with earnestness in this part of the world. It can be of no use to me, but as it may enable me the better to prosecute that design; and it must be owned that the present possession of something in the Church would make my application for an establishment in those islands more considered. I mean the charter for a College there; which of all things I desire, as being what would reconcile duty and inclination, making my life at once more useful to the public, and more agreeable to myself, than I can possibly expect elsewhere."

He got a deanery at last, and was thus advanced a step towards Bermuda. As we have already seen, he had been presented to the best deanery in Ireland, that of Derry. Next month he went to visit his new possession. He was charmed with Londonderry. "The walls with walks round, planted with trees, are like those of Padua. I have hardly seen a more agreeable situation, much *gusto grande* in the laying out this whole country, which recalls to my mind many prospects of Naples and Sicily. I may chance not to be twopence richer for the preferment; for by the time I have paid for the house and first-fruits, I hope I shall have brought the Bermuda project to an issue, which,

[1] September 19, 1723—Percival MSS.

God willing, is to be my employment next winter in London."[1]

To London, accordingly, he went in September, to raise funds and obtain a charter from the king, fortified by a letter from Swift, then in Dublin, recommending him to Lord Carteret, then at Bath, who was coming over to succeed the Duke of Grafton as Lord-Lieutenant. Swift was as cordial as ever, and bore him no ill-will on account of the Vanessa affair. In this remarkable letter he thus describes Berkeley's previous career and present mission :—

"Going to England very young, about thirteen years ago, the bearer of this became founder of a sect called the Immaterialists, by the force of a very curious book upon that subject. . . . He is an absolute philosopher with regard to money, titles, and power ; and for three years past has been struck with a notion of founding a university at Bermudas, by a charter from the Crown. He has seduced several of the hopefullest young clergymen and others here, many of them well provided for, and all in the fairest way for preferment ; but in England his conquests are greater, and I doubt will spread very far this winter. He showed me a little tract which he designs to publish, and there your Excellency will see his whole scheme of a life academico-philosophical, of a college founded for Indian scholars and missionaries ; where he most exorbitantly proposes a whole hundred pounds a-year for himself. . . . His heart will break if his deanery be not taken from him, and left to your Excellency's disposal. I discouraged him by the coldness of Courts and Ministers, who will interpret all this as impossible and a vision ; but nothing will do."

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[1] June 8, 1724—Percival MSS. In the same letter he says, "I have farmed out my lands for £1250 a-year, but am assured they are worth £200 more."

As Swift had predicted, his conquests spread far and fast in England. Nothing shows more the magic of Berkeley's presence and influence than the history of his reception in London. The scheme met with encouragement from all sorts of people, in a generation represented by Sir Robert Walpole. The subscriptions soon reached £5000, and the list included Sir Robert Walpole himself. The members of the Scriblerus Club being met at Lord Bathurst's house at dinner, they agreed to rally Berkeley, who was also his guest, on his Bermuda scheme. Having listened to many lively things the party had to say, he begged to be heard in his turn, and "displayed his plan with such an astonishing and amazing force of eloquence and enthusiasm that they were struck dumb, and, after some pause, rose all up together, with earnestness exclaiming, 'Let us set out with him immediately.'"[1] Bermuda became the fashion in London society, and Bolingbroke wrote to Swift that he would "gladly exchange Europe for its charms, only not in a missionary capacity."

Berkeley was not satisfied with subscriptions. He remembered what Lord Percival had said about the protection and aid of Government. He interceded with George the First, and obtained encouragement to hope for a grant of £20,000 to endow the Bermuda College, out of the purchase money of St Christopher, given to England by the Treaty of Utrecht. He canvassed members of both Houses. The vote was carried in the House of Commons with only two dissentient voices, in May 1726. Walpole, while he did not oppose, hoped that the bill would be thrown out, and secretly resolved

[1] Warton's 'Essay on Pope,' vol. ii. p. 254.

that it should come to nothing in the end. For the four years which followed September 1724, Berkeley lived in London, negotiating and otherwise ardently pushing forward his enterprise. London was his home now for the third time. It was in those years that he was seen at the receptions of Caroline, at Leicester Fields, when she was Princess of Wales; and afterwards at St James's, or at Kensington, when she became the Queen-Consort of George the Second—not, he says, because he loved Courts, but because he loved America. Clarke was still in Piccadilly, but Butler had gone into the seclusion of his Stanhope rectory. Voltaire, then unknown to fame, was visiting England, and mentions that he met "the discoverer of the true theory of vision," when he was in London in 1726. The Queen, as we know, was fond of theological and philosophical discussion. Ten years before, when Princess of Wales, she had been a royal go-between in the famous philosophical correspondence between Clarke and Leibniz. And now, Berkeley being in London, she was glad to include him along with Clarke, Sherlock, and Hoadley at her weekly reunions, and to hear Hoadley supporting Clarke, or Sherlock arguing for Berkeley. "He was idolised in England before he set off for America. He used to go to St James's two days a-week to dispute with Dr Samuel Clarke before Queen Caroline, then Princess of Wales, and had a magnificent gold medal presented to him by George the Second; but he complained of the drudgery of taking part in these useless disputes."[1]

At last his patience was rewarded. In September 1728 we unexpectedly find him at Greenwich, newly

[1] Preface to the 'Literary Relics of George Monck Berkeley' (1789).

married too, and about to sail for Rhode Island, on his "mission of godlike benevolence." "To-morrow," he wrote on the 3rd of September to Lord Percival, "we sail down the river. Mr James and Mr Dalton go with me; so doth my wife, a daughter of the late Chief-Justice Forster, whom I married since I saw your lordship. I chose her for her qualities of mind, and her unaffected inclination to books. She goes with great thankfulness, to live a plain farmer's life, and wear stuff of her own spinning. I have presented her with a spinning-wheel. Her fortune was £2000 originally, but travelling and exchange have reduced it to less than £1500 English money. I have placed that, and about £600 of my own, in South Sea annuities." We are otherwise told that the wife of his choice was disposed to mystical quietism, and that Fénelon and Madame Guyon were among her favourites.

Berkeley was in his forty-fourth year, when, in deep devotion to his Ideal, and full of glowing visions of a Utopia in the West, he sailed for Rhode Island, as pioneer of the enterprise, with the promise of Sir Robert Walpole that the parliamentary grant should be paid to him as soon as he had made the necessary arrangements for receiving it. He bought land in America, and lived there for nearly three years, but he never reached the fair Islands that had touched his imagination.

CHAPTER II.

RECLUSE LIFE IN RHODE ISLAND.

Towards the end of January in 1729, the "hired ship of 250 tons," in which Berkeley and his party sailed from the Thames, appeared in the Narragansett waters, on the western shore of Rhode Island, and landed them in the harbour at Newport. They had touched at Virginia on their way, where he "received many honours from the governor and the principal inhabitants," after they had been, he writes,[1] "a long time blundering about the ocean."

The 'New England Courier' of the day gives this picture of a scene at Newport: "Yesterday arrived here Dean Berkeley of Londonderry. He is a gentleman of middle stature, of an agreeable, pleasant, and erect aspect. He was ushered into the town with a great number of gentlemen, to whom he behaved himself after a very complaisant manner." Writing to Percival a few days after his arrival, he says he was "never more agreeably surprised than at the sight of the town and harbour of Newport. There is a more probable prospect of doing good here than in any other

[1] February 7, 1729—Percival MSS.

part of the world: were it in my power I should not demur about situating our college here. But no step can be taken herein without the consent of the Crown." Around him at Newport was some of the softest rural and grandest ocean scenery in the world, which had fresh charms even for one whose childhood was spent in the vale of the Nore, who was familiar with rural England, had lingered at Naples and at Ischia, and wandered among the mountains of Sicily.

The island in which Berkeley landed on that January day is about fifteen miles long and four or five broad. It was his home during three years of waiting for the fulfilment of the promise on the faith of which he left England. It is about seventy miles from Boston, and about the same distance from Newhaven and Yale College. The Indians called it the Isle of Peace. A ridge of hills crosses the centre, from which pleasant meadows slope to a rocky shore. The air is balmy, with gorgeous sunsets in summer and autumn, and the Gulf Stream tempers the surrounding sea. It then contained about 15,000 inhabitants, including about 1500 negro slaves. The climate attracted visitors from the mainland and the West Indies; while the toleration which reigned within the little society made it then in America what Holland had long been in Europe. The people, he writes,[1] "are industrious, and though less orthodox have not less virtue, and I am sure they have more regularity, than those I left in Europe. They are indeed a strange medley of different persuasions, which nevertheless do all agree in one point,—that the Church of England is the second best."

[1] March 28, 1729—Percival MSS.

The Rhode Island gentry of that day preserved the customs of the squires in the old country, from whom they were descended—for tradition speaks of a cheerful society. The fox-chase with hounds and horns, as well as fishing and fowling, were favourite sports in Narragansett.

In the summer after his arrival, Berkeley and his wife moved from Newport to a sequestered valley in the interior of the island, where he bought a farm and built a house. He named his island-home Whitehall, in loyal remembrance of the palace of the monarchs of England. Here he began domestic life, and became the father of a family. The house may still be seen near a hill which commands a wide view of land and ocean. The neighbouring groves, and the rocks that skirt the coast, offered the shade and silence and solitude that soothed him in his recluse life. The friends with whom he had crossed the ocean went to stay in Boston, but no solicitations could withdraw him from the rural quiet of Whitehall. "After my long fatigue of business," he wrote to Lord Percival,[1] "this retirement is very agreeable to me; and my wife loves a country life and books, as well as to pass her time continually and cheerfully, without any other conversation than her husband and the dead." Till now he had lived in Trinity College, or in hired apartments in London and in Italy. At Whitehall he was better placed for meditative work than since he first left Dublin in 1713, on leave of absence from his College, and he had one to share his life whose sympathy was with mystic quietism and Fénelon.

Though Berkeley loved the peace of this rural home,

[1] March 29, 1730—Percival MSS.

and the "still air of delightful studies," he mixed in the society of Newport, with its lawyers, physicians, and enterprising merchants, some of whom had been trained in the universities of Europe. He helped to form a philosophical reunion there, and found persons who could understand how ideal realism implied no distrust of the eyes and hands, nor indifference to human affairs.

He appears in Rhode Island as the ingenious student, as well as the ardent leader, devoted to an apostolic mission. We find him much among his books, often at a favourite retreat below a projecting rock which commanded a spacious view of the ocean—seldom out of the island-home, to no extent a traveller on the continent of America. The "eloquence and enthusiasm" which years before carried away Lord Bathurst and his friends was diverted more or less from social action to meditation, but always with human interests in view. Meditative life was probably, after all, more according to his disposition.

But from the first he had so planned his enterprise that it was at the mercy of Sir Robert Walpole. The prospect, which was doubtful when he left England, darkened even to his sanguine eye after he reached Rhode Island. "The truth is," he told Lord Percival in the June after he landed,[1] "I am not in my own power, not being at liberty to act without the concurrence as well of the Ministry as of my associates. I cannot therefore place the college where I please; and though on some accounts I did, and do still, think it would more probably be attended with success if placed here rather than in Bermuda, yet if the Government

[1] Percival MSS.

and those engaged with me should persist in the old scheme, I am ready to go thither, and will do so as soon as I hear the money is received and my associates arrived. Before I left England I was reduced to a difficult situation. Had I continued there, the report would have obtained (which I had found beginning to spread) that I had dropped the design, after it had cost me and my friends so much trouble and expense. On the other hand, if I had taken leave of my friends, even those who assisted and approved my undertaking would have condemned my living abroad before the king's bounty was received. This obliged me to come away in the private manner that I did, and to run the risk of a tedious winter voyage. Nothing less could have convinced the world that I was in earnest." "I wait here," he writes to him a year later, "with all the anxiety that attends suspense, until I know what I can depend upon, and what course I am to take. I must own the disappointments I have met with have really touched me, not without much affecting my health and spirits. If the founding of a college for the spread of religion and learning in America had been a foolish project, it cannot be supposed the Court, the Ministers, and the Parliament would have given such encouragement to it; and if, after all that encouragement, they also engaged to endow and protect it lest it drop, the disappointment indeed may be to me, but the censure, I think, will light elsewhere."

He had embarked to realise a beautiful vision, but by means which hardly commend themselves to ordinary men of the world. They could see only "a foolish project" in making either islands like the Bermudas, six

hundred miles out in the Atlantic, or Rhode Island, far from the chief Indian population, a basis of operations for the Christian civilisation of America. The crisis of the enterprise at last came. Sir Robert Walpole had never seriously entered into it. What seemed to him knight-errantry was not embraced in his policy. The personal charm of the enthusiastic leader had carried the grant through the House of Commons. But the ardent missionary, his social idealism treated as Quixotic, was now a studious recluse at Whitehall. "If you put the question to me as a Minister," Walpole at last told his friend, "I must and can assure you that the money shall most undoubtedly be paid—as soon as suits with public convenience; but if you ask me as a friend whether Dean Berkeley should continue in America, expecting the payment of £20,000, I advise him by all means to return to Europe, and to give up his present expectations." "I do not wonder at your disappointment," Lord Percival said,[1] in making this known to him. "The design was too great and good to be accomplished in an age when men love darkness better than the light, and where nothing is considered but with a political view. A very great lord asked me the other day whether I thought the Indians could not be saved as well as we; and whether I had considered that learning tended to make the plantations independent of their mother country; adding that the ignorance of the Indians, and the variety of sects, was our best security. He was even sorry that we had a university in Dublin; and yet this Lord is the ornament of the nobility for learning and sobriety, but he reduced all to policy."

[1] December 23, 1730—Percival MSS.

Berkeley's life in Rhode Island marks his return to philosophical authorship, in which the *De Motu*, ten years before, was his last adventure. Those of his remaining letters which are of most philosophic interest were written there; and 'Alciphron,' the most popular of his books, was prepared in the library at Whitehall, and in an alcove under the Hanging Rocks near the shore.

In this retreat he was not without congenial company. Soon after he had settled in Rhode Island, he was visited by Samuel Johnson, the Episcopal missionary at Stratford, one of the most acute thinkers then in America.[1] Johnson had already made some acquaintance with Berkeley's theory of vision and of the material world, and was disposed to believe that sight is foresight and that matter is realised in perception. Intercourse between them by visits and correspondence followed. Explanations and vindications of the theory were proposed in letters from Whitehall. Johnson became an ardent convert. He illustrated and applied to theology, in his own 'Elementa Philosophica,' twenty years afterwards, the lessons he then learned. This intercourse with one whom he describes as "a man of parts and a philosophic genius," was one of Berkeley's chief pleasures in his studious seclusion.

The letters to Johnson contain interesting illustrations of what Berkeley thought about the relation between the Divine Ideas and the transitory ideas or phenomena

[1] Johnson was afterwards president of King's College in New York. He died in 1772. A short account of him, by Dr Chandler, was published in 1824. We have now a larger 'Life and Correspondence,' by the Rev. Dr Beardsley (New York, 1874), which contains an interesting chapter on Berkeley.

of our sensible world; the ultimate meaning of causation; and other kindred subjects. The following sentences in one of them point towards metaphysical idealism :—

"I have no objections against calling the Ideas in the mind of God archetypes of ours. But I object against those archetypes by philosophers supposed to be real things, and to have an absolute rational existence distinct from their being perceived by any mind whatsoever;—it being the opinion of all materialists that an ideal existence in the divine mind is one thing, and the real existence of material things another."

Space and time are presented in some new lights in the sentences which follow :—

"As to Space, I have no notion of any but that which is relative. . . . Sir Isaac Newton supposeth an absolute space distinct from relative, and consequent thereto absolute motion distinct from relative motion; and with all other mathematicians he supposeth the infinite divisibility of the finite parts of this absolute space: he also supposeth material bodies to drift therein. . . . I cannot agree with him in these particulars. I make no scruple to use the word space as well as all other words in common use; but I do not mean thereby a distinct absolute being. . . . By τὸ νῦν I suppose to be implied that all things past and to come are present to the mind of God, and that there is in Him no change, variation, or succession of time. A succession of ideas I take to *constitute* Time, and not to be only the *sensible measure* thereof, as Mr Locke and others think. But in these matters every one is to think for himself, and speak as he finds. One of my earliest inquiries was about Time, which led me into several paradoxes that I did not think fit or necessary to publish, particularly into the notion that the resurrection follows next moment to death. We are confounded and perplexed about time (*a*) supposing a succession in God, (*b*) conceiving that we have an abstract idea of time,

(*c*) supposing that time in one mind is to be measured by succession of ideas in another, (*d*) not considering the true end and use of words, which as often terminate in the will as in the understanding, being employed rather to excite influence and direct action than to produce clear and distinct ideas."

Here are some sentences on abstractions :—

"Abstract general ideas was a notion that Mr Locke held in common with the schoolmen, and, I think, all other philosophers. It runs through his whole book of Human Understanding. He holds an abstract idea of *existence*, exclusive of perceiving and being perceived. I cannot find I have any such idea, and this is my reason against it. . . . I think it might prevent a good deal of obscurity and confusion to examine well what I have said about abstraction, and about the true use and significancy of words, in several parts of these things that I have published, though much remains to be said on that subject. You say you agree with me that there is nothing within your mind but God and other spirits, and the ideas contained in them. This is a principle from which much may be deduced. . . . I could wish that all the things I have published on these philosophical subjects were read in the order wherein I published them."

What follows on causality is important :—

"Mechanical philosophy does not assign any one natural efficient cause, in the proper sense of causality ; nor is it, as to its use, concerned at all about abstract Matter. . . . Cause is a word taken in different senses. A proper, active, efficient cause I can conceive none but Spirit ; nor action but where there is Will. But this doth not hinder the allowing of occasional causes, sought for by science, which are in truth but *signs ;* and more than this is not requisite in the best physics. Neither doth it hinder the admitting

other efficient and truly operative causes besides God; such as finite spirits of different orders, which may be termed active causes, as acting indeed, though by limited and derivative powers. As for an unthinking agent, no point of physics is explained by it, nor is it conceivable. That the divine conservation of sensible things is the same thing with a continued creation was a common opinion of the schoolmen and others. . . . The very poets teach a doctrine not unlike the schools—*mens agitat molem.* The Stoics and Platonists are full of the same notion. I am not therefore singular in this point itself so much as in my way of proving it. . . . As to guilt, it is the same thing whether I kill a man with my hands or by an instrument. The imputation, therefore, upon the sanctity of God is equally, whether we suppose our sensations and sensible things to be produced immediately by God, or by the mediation of subordinate occasional causes, which are all His creatures and are moved by His laws. This theological consideration is beside the question; for such I hold all points to be which bear equally hard on both sides of it. Difficulties about the principle of moral actions will cease if we consider that all guilt is in the operative will; and that the ideas or phenomena of which we are percipient in the senses, from whatever cause they are produced, are in themselves alike inert."[1]

New England at this time possessed, in Jonathan Edwards, the most subtle metaphysical reasoner that America has produced. Edwards represents the genius of Puritan religion in abstract reasoning, as Bunyan

[1] This suggests that active causation is presupposed in, and so got from, our moral consciousness of our own spiritual individuality and responsible agency. As nothing analogous to this is found in sense, or in sensuous imagination, sense symbolism *only* (not causation) is discoverable in the natural world of sense.

and Milton represent it in the world of creative imagination. Though he does not name Berkeley, he seems to have adopted his conception of the material world and of natural law. This famous Calvinistic thinker was one of Johnson's pupils at Yale College, living a life of devout meditation on the bank of the Hudson river, when Berkeley was in Rhode Island. Edwards's 'Freedom of the Will' did not appear till 1754. It is in his earlier writings that his metaphysical conception of matter is to be found. The necessitated volition of Edwards was foreign to the thought of Berkeley, whose tacit recognition of independent agency in finite persons saved him from the pantheistic conclusions avowed by Spinoza, if not implied in the doctrine of Malebranche and of the American Puritan. Edwards, however, defended the conclusion that the objects of our sensuous perceptions can have no realised intelligible existence abstracted from the sense-experience of a spirit. He also argued that, although the ideas or phenomena of which things consist, and the laws that regulate them, are not determined by men, but by Power external to all human minds, that Power cannot be meaningless substance, but must be the reason and will of God. The phenomena of sense are signs of thoughts, which are thus presented to finite minds by God's will, in whom things move and have their being and consist. The material world is composed of phenomena; but the natural laws which connect and regulate the phenomena are steady and rational. To suppose the universe existing in this way does not, Edwards sees, in the least affect the stability of physical science. The

popular objection of the want of persistence in sensible things, on this new conception of what is meant by their "reality," he answers in an ingenious manner, showing his belief in their want of independent substance and power. The "substance" of bodies, when bodies are called substances, means "the infinitely exact and precise divine archetypal Idea; together with an unwaverable, perfectly exact, precise, and stable Will, with respect to corresponding communications to created minds, and effects on their minds." The objection that all this contradicts "common-sense" Edwards encounters by showing the absurdity of the common opinion, that we can see distant things, and by contrasting our visual with our tactual perceptions. Withdraw from anything its colour, or its other secondary and by consent of all dependent qualities: think of colour as a person born blind must do. All we can then be conscious of is a blind feeling of resistance. Every one who reflects must therefore allow that the material world is very different from what it is supposed to be, in the assumptions of ordinary unreflecting common-sense. It is thus that Edwards paves the way to his general conclusions — that the deepest reality in the universe is and must be Spirit, in which he coincides with Berkeley; and that the only causes in existence, "bodily or spiritual," must themselves be effects of antecedent causes, in which he differs from Berkeley. Whether Edwards drew his thoughts about matter from Berkeley's books at first hand, or through Johnson, is uncertain; but it is a fact worthy of remembrance, that Berkeley's new conception of nature and the material

world was entertained by the most metaphysical mind in America.[1]

Berkeley, with his wife and their infant son George, bade farewell to America in the autumn of 1731.[2] They sailed from Boston in October, and reached London in January.

Thus ended the romantic episode of Rhode Island, which warms the heart and affects the imagination more perhaps than any other incident even in Berkeley's life. Of all who have ever landed on the American shore, none was animated by a more unworldly spirit. The country in which and for which he lived now acknowledges that in his visit it was touched by the halo of an illustrious reputation. His dream of future American Empire has not been without its influence in promoting its own fulfilment in these latter times.

> "Westward the course of Empire takes its way;
> The four first Acts already past:
> A fifth shall close the Drama with the day;
> Time's noblest offspring is the last."

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[1] I am glad to be able to refer, in confirmation of this interpretation of Jonathan Edwards—hazarded in my edition of Berkeley's Works—to the authority of the learned Professor Fisher of Yale College, in his 'Discussions in History and Theology' (New York, 1880). This volume contains a valuable essay on "The Philosophy of Jonathan Edwards."

[2] An infant daughter died at Whitehall a few days before they left Rhode Island.

CHAPTER III.

THE MINUTE PHILOSOPHERS.

Berkeley lived for more than two years in London after his return from America. This fifth and last visit was marked by his reappearance as a philosophical author, after the ineffectual endeavour to realise the grand social ideal which had consumed the ten best years of his life. His restless middle age closed with renewed activity in the literature of philosophy, suspended since he had his home in Trinity College. This fresh issue bore traces of his surroundings and recent projects.

Indisposition to society and indifferent health were now apparent. Even before he left Rhode Island there were signs of a less buoyant spirit, and already, at the age of forty-seven, of approaching old age. His constitution was never robust, burdened too by the eager impetuous temperament.

The London to which he returned in 1732 contained few of those with whom he had been brought into connection at the brilliant social gatherings of former years. Samuel Clarke and his antagonist Anthony Collins both died in the year in which Berkeley sailed from the Thames. Swift had left London for ever, and

Steele had followed Addison to the grave. Gay, the friend of Berkeley and Pope, died about the time of the return from America, and Arbuthnot was approaching his end at Hampstead. Butler was buried in the deep seclusion of his northern rectory at Stanhope, pondering the thoughts which four years later found expression in the 'Analogy.' But Pope was still at Twickenham, busy with his 'Essay on Man,' receiving visits from Bolingbroke, or visiting Lord Bathurst at Cirencester Park. Berkeley's instruction to his American correspondent Samuel Johnson, to direct his letters "to Lord Percival's, at his house in Pall Mall," shows continued intimacy with his early patron, who had been his correspondent for a quarter of a century. Once or twice, "in obedience to the Queen's command," he attended as of old at Court, "to discourse with her Majesty on what he had observed worthy of notice in America."

The immediate occasion of his return to philosophical authorship was the increase of scepticism about religion. To vanquish sceptical free-thinkers was, according to J. S. Mill, "the leading purpose of Berkeley's career as a philosopher." It was at any rate the chief purpose of his authorship in middle life. The outcome of his literary life as a whole was—to awaken our dormant consciousness of the Eternal Spirit, concealed yet revealed in the sensuous phantasmagoria—the truest and deepest reality—symbolised by the things of sense, through their constitution under natural law. Instead of Active Reason, unintelligible Matter and Force—non-rational, blind, and therefore untrustworthy — was the only "God" he could find in the teaching of Toland and

Collins, who arrogated to themselves the honourable title of free-thinker. Without fully explaining what he meant by atheism, he assured himself that Collins was an "atheist"; and also that the selfish and sensuous utilitarianism of Mandeville, and even the sentimental ethic of Shaftesbury, with both of which he had controversy, were consequences of concealed atheism. That the main current of thought among the self-styled "free-thinkers" of the time was towards a materialistic fatalism, inconsistent with the supremacy of Reason and Goodness in the universe, was what he took for granted in the controversy in which he engaged about this time. He connected it with the outcry against theology, as based on faith in meaningless mysteries, which was countenanced by some contemporary mathematicians.

The fervid impatience natural to Berkeley was apt to blind him in some degree to the wide scope of the questions underlying the argumentative criticism of the fashionable free-thinkers, and to the need for patient investigation. For the controversy ultimately turned upon principles advocated in the then obscure and forgotten books of Spinoza; and upon others that were afterwards involved in the searching scepticism of Hume, and even in the later rationalism of Germany. With his subject in clear outline in a transparent atmosphere of thought, but at his own less comprehensive point of view, there may be found in Berkeley's confident polemic—intended to meet popular objections—a want of that large intellectual grasp which adequately estimates the difficulties that man has to meet in the intellectual and moral system of the universe. There is along with this

perhaps an insufficient sense of the sublime and awful mystery which surrounds the final problem of human life; and it must be confessed that he now and then approaches too near the tone of sectarian controversy.

He had been reading in Rhode Island what deistical free-thinkers in England were writing, and his repeated visits to London had made him familiar with theological sceptics. The result of the reading and the personal intercourse, and of meditation upon both, appeared in 'Alciphron, or the Minute Philosopher,' the outcome of studies in Rhode Island, published after his return to London. This is the largest, and was at the time of its appearance the most popular, of Berkeley's books. It is a philosophical argument for religion, offered about the time when, according to Bishop Butler, it had "come to be taken for granted that Christianity is not so much as a subject for inquiry, but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious; and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were by way of reprisals, for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world."[1] Berkeley's polemic takes the form of dialogues that may help the English reader to understand the charm of Cicero and Plato. The "minute philosophers" are the deistical and the atheistical free-thinkers: the argument is directed to restore and sustain faith in the religious conception of the universe; and especially in Christianity as the deepest and truest revelation of God.

There is more appearance of learning in 'Alciphron' than in any of Berkeley's early works. Authorities, ancient and modern, are frequently cited, with allusions

[1] Butler's 'Analogy'—Advertisement.

which imply increased familiarity with philosophical literature, and a more extensive observation of life. The appeals to imagination in the pictures of rural nature are characteristic, and in some parts the dialogue has the charm and sentiment of a pastoral poem. It owes its artistic features largely to Rhode Island, for the pictures are favourite scenes around Whitehall; and the reader is attracted to the green vales and ocean shores, with which the writer was familiar in that Arcadia.

'Alciphron' consists of seven dialogues. The first opens the discussion; in the second and third, questions of ethics are debated; the fourth reveals the perpetual providence and supremacy of Eternal Mind in the very constitution of visible things, and the constant active presence of a Divine order in nature; the three last deal with the spiritual and civilising advantages of religion in its Christian form, as well as with objection to it on account of its ultimate mystery. Subtle intellect is employed in defending a more generous morality against selfish theories, founded on organic pleasure and pain, like Mandeville's; or on enthusiastic sentiment like Shaftesbury's; while his new thought about the sort of reality that belongs to sensible things is applied in vindication of theism, and to meet objections to the practical awakening of a deeper religious life by the historical facts of Christianity. The utility —in a wide meaning of utility—of virtue; hope of the continued life of moral agents after the dissolution of the body by death; the practical sufficiency of the evidence of religion for the demands of reason; with the adaptation of man to the mysteries that are in-

evitable in his religious thought—are some of the questions discussed.

Among the interlocutors Alciphron and Lysicles represent the "minute philosophy" that had been dignified as "free-thought"—the former representing its more intellectual aspect, the latter the petty arguments of shallow worldlings who live for transitory pleasures. Euphranor and Crito advocate morality and religion. Dion is mostly a spectator.

In the first dialogue the company try to find common principles applicable to disputed questions in morality and religion; and in the end Alciphron is made to confess that beliefs which are indispensable to the common weal are truly natural, and are therefore reliable rules for human action. He had before tried to show that the only genuine constituents of human nature, in which all men are practically agreed, are the pleasures and pains of the body;—and that faith in a morality transcending sensuous phenomena and animal pleasure; faith in God or the supremacy of moral government; and faith in the continued life of moral agents after the death of the body—have been artificially produced and sustained, not being always and everywhere acknowledged by men. Yet he has in the end to allow that beliefs which make no appearance in early life, which are not reached at all in the experience of many men, may be dormant in the essential constitution of man. It may in this way be the issue of our original constitution, that each of us should consider himself as a part of the great social organism, to the common good of which he is individually bound to contribute, if he would live according to genuine human nature and the

true order of the universe. So the question in the remaining dialogues resolves into this: Does faith in omnipotent goodness, and in life after death, which sceptical free-thinkers try to destroy, really promote the highest interest of men, and tend to realise the ideal man? Is this faith required for the full satisfaction of human nature, notwithstanding the dormant state in which it is often found?

Mandeville's 'Fable of the Bees,' with its ambiguous generalisation—"private vices, public benefits"—is the particular subject of criticism in the second dialogue. It is here argued that there are ascertainable differences in kind among the pleasures of which men are capable. The moral theory of Shaftesbury is taken up by the interlocutors at their next discussion, with its analogy between conscience and taste, and its disparagement of a faith in immortality that is grounded on the present unequal distribution of pleasure and pain, as apt to minister to selfishness, and to foster an ignoble spirit. It is argued in reply that this dreamy morality is unsuited to human nature, which needs a firmer motive than sentiment, and has to be sustained by an appeal to the complex elements of our constitution.

But Alciphron is not satisfied to rest faith in God, and in realities deeper than sense, on the fact that it is advantageous. That a belief is consolatory, and that its decay introduces despair and misery, does not prove that it is true. The question that has really to be met is this: Are we obliged on grounds of reason to believe that God exists; nay, do we even know what we mean, when we assert that God exists, and use this mysterious name? The visual idealism of Berkeley is introduced

to provide an answer to this question. Euphranor and Crito maintain that, as the visible world can have no independent power, being merely the language of Omnipresent Active Intelligence, we have in the evolution of the visible world the same *kind* of proof of the present agency of God that we have of a fellow-man, when we see his calculated actions and hear his reasonable speech. Hence our knowledge of God, the argument further urges, is not merely negative and metaphorical, as Archbishop King and Bishop Browne, as well as the free-thinkers, had maintained that theological knowledge must be. We are not obliged to worship an unknown and unknowable God; for we see in all visible ideas or phenomena the persistent activity of intelligence, similar to what we are conscious of in ourselves, and to what we recognise through the mediation of sight in our fellow-men. We daily see God acting naturally.

The theological way of thinking about the universe, it is argued, is true free-thinking, and a life corresponding to it is the ideal of human nature. Religious faith is perfect reason: corresponding practice would be perfect morality. This is tacitly implied in the reply to Alciphron, and in his defence of Christianity in the three concluding dialogues.

If Berkeley did not fully fathom the deep and complex questions involved in his argument, his own position in these dialogues was a mystery to the sceptical thinkers of his time. "'Alciphron' is hard to be understood," Bolingbroke writes. "I propose, however, to reconcile you to metaphysics by showing how they may be em-

ployed against metaphysicians; and that whenever you do not understand them nobody else does—no, not even those who wrote them." The book soon encountered a number of ephemeral attacks; and Berkeley's "visible God" was a stumbling-block to many.

In September 1732, a few months after 'Alciphron' appeared, the 'Daily Post-Boy' contained a letter of objections to the theological conception of the visible world. Berkeley responded in 'The Theory of Visual Language Vindicated and Explained,'—unfolding more fully the reason for faith in Divine Reason and intending Will, as the ultimate explanation of orderly change in the visible world; through which finite spirits commune with one another, and with the Omnipresent Spirit in whom all live and move and have their being.

Though Berkeley's theory of the visible world had been published for more than twenty years, this anonymous letter in the 'Post-Boy' was treated by him as the only important criticism it had hitherto drawn forth. Other critics, not anonymous, followed. "As to the Bishop of Cork's book, and the other book you allude to, the author whereof is Mr Baxter," Berkeley remarks in a letter about this time to his American friend Johnson, "they are both very little read and considered here, for which reason I have taken no public notice of them. To answer objections already answered, and repeat the same things, is a needless as well as a disagreeable task. Nor should I have taken notice of that Letter about Vision, had it not been printed in a newspaper, which gave it course and spread it through the kingdom." The "Bishop of

Cork" referred to was Browne, provost of Trinity College in Berkeley's undergraduate days, whose 'Analogy of Things Divine and Supernatural with Things Natural and Human' appeared early in 1733. It contains a dissertation on the nature and extent of our knowledge of God. This is chiefly in answer to Berkeley's objections to human knowledge in matters of theology being only analogical, which he interpreted to mean wholly negative. Browne had formerly so insisted on the incomprehensible difference between a human mind and the Divine Mind that he seemed to make it impossible to apply the term "mind" to God with any meaning. He argued paradoxically that it was as absurd to attribute consciousness, intelligence, or goodness, in the ordinary meaning, to Deity, as to suppose God possessed of hands or feet. This appeared to Berkeley to differ little, except in words, from atheism, and to imply that God, like abstract Matter, is a meaningless word. He argued that the only ground we have for believing that God exists at all implies that He must be intelligent, wise, and good, in the human meaning of those words. Otherwise the name God is merely an equivalent for *x*: Deity may be left out of account in dealing with human affairs. "Baxter," mentioned in the letter to Johnson, was a Scotchman,[1] who had published a year or two before an 'Inquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul,' which contained a chapter on "Dean Berkeley's scheme against the existence of a material world," and professed to prove its inconclusiveness. Baxter treats the "scheme" as scepticism, its

[1] Baxter was born in Old Aberdeen, about 1687, and died at Whittinghame, in East Lothian, in 1750.

advocate as logically obliged to be a total sceptic, and his theory of matter as "a complication of all the varieties of scepticism that had ever been broached." To make this out he plays on the ambiguous word "idea"; and overlooks the interpretable significance of ideas of sense, through which present perceptions give rise to reasonable expectations. After confounding "real ideas" of sense with misleading illusions of fancy, he is easily able to show that a world of fancies cannot be a world at all, and that the conversion of things into ideas does not admit even the knowledge that is needed for the regulation of life; while it implies that the Supreme Power must be either blindly irrational or intent to deceive. Baxter's criticism is interesting now as evidence that the new conception of unsubstantial, impotent, and wholly phenomenal matter was beginning to attract Scotch metaphysical intellect; which soon after, in the person of David Hume, became, through the incitement of the negative side of Berkeley's philosophy, a chief moving force in European thought.

CHAPTER IV.

ATHEISM AND AGNOSTICISM: WHETHER GOD CAN BE SEEN, AND WHAT GOD IS.

The works produced by Berkeley in this period of controversial authorship showed a certain amount of change, if not in his philosophical point of view, at any rate in the questions to which he was trying to find an answer. The writings of his youth, which issued from Trinity College, were meant to demonstrate the unsubstantiality and impotence of the surrounding things of Sense, and the meaninglessness of "matter" and "force," when wholly unrealised in living perception. He now turned more expressly from Matter to God, to whose power and providence he had referred the persistence in natural change found in what we see and touch. He was now more bent on proving that the Universal Power is Spirit, and that the "shows of sense" are truly a revelation of God, than in arguing that the things of sense themselves depend for their reality on living percipients. The little tract *De Motu* showed this tendency years before.

But a grave difficulty lay in his way. It is one apt to perplex those who meditate deeply in philosophical

theology, though I am not sure that Berkeley yet saw, or ever fully saw, its magnitude. It had been seen by Spinoza: it was afterwards seen, from very different points, by Hume and by Kant. It rises in the form of questions like these: Is the name "God," after all, more intelligible than the unperceived and unperceiving "matter" and "force" that Berkeley had dislodged on account of their unintelligibleness? If the one can be resolved into the residual x, must not the other? We cannot see or touch unperceived matter; but have we evidence, in sense or otherwise, for the invisible omnipresent God? If both words are meaningless, what gain or satisfaction to reason is there in substituting one meaningless word for another meaningless word, which, on account of its meaninglessness, had been already dismissed? Are we not inviting materialists to worship an unknown and unknowable God? We may apply the names "mind" and "spirit" to the Power to which all is thus at last referred; but this is presumptuously attributing to an unknown Being attributes like those we find in our own self-conscious personality. As Spinoza had said—"A triangle, if it could speak, might in like manner say that its God is triangular, or a circle that the divine Being is circular." Even the pious and practical Locke—in one of the last sentences he ever wrote, contained in a letter sent from his deathbed to his young friend Anthony Collins—confessed that he could not, "because of the common name, equal the *mind* that he found in himself to the infinite and incomprehensible Being, which, for want of right and distinct conceptions, is called *mind* also, or the Eternal Mind."

With an inadequate view of this difficulty, yet with some apprehension that it must be met, Berkeley exchanged the question of his youth—How we find, and what we are to understand by, the material or sense-given World?—into this question of his middle age—How we find, and what we are to understand by, the Universal Power, whose constant presence is signified by the orderly phenomena of sense?

We have already found that Berkeley's juvenile anti-materialism, in the 'Treatise on Human Knowledge,' has a side on which it looks like universal scepticism, or at least theological agnosticism. Pyrrhonists, like Hume, have been ready to detect this. The argument which leads to the phenomenal constitution of the material world has accordingly been employed to prove the transitory phenomenal constitution of self, and the meaninglessness of the personal pronouns "I" and "you." Deny the persistence and independence of what we see and touch, and we must, it then seems, doubt persistence and independence altogether—which is to doubt whether anything exists, or whether real existence has any meaning.

This universal doubt was of course very far from Berkeley's thought and intention. Like every other believer in reality, he supposed persistence and power to centre somewhere; he had no thought of treating the self-conscious persons, as well as the sensible things, in the universe, as only phenomena. He thought that reason obliged him to banish effective substance or power from the things he saw and touched. In the "common sense," as some philosophers call it, in which we all consciously or unconsciously share (for in many

this common sense, or common reason, remains largely dormant), he found evidence that the ever-fluctuating world presented to the senses has for one of its functions—if not for its chief end—to make human beings aware of one another's existence ; and for another of its functions, to educate human intellect by inviting men to interpret physical nature. For the world of idealised things, transitory and dependent on the perceptions of a living mind, has plainly this remarkable characteristic somehow attached to it,—that it is the medium for intelligent communion among individual or separate conscious beings. It enables persons to make intelligible signs to persons. Natural phenomena are accepted in faith as trustworthy symbols. Thus the data of sight signify data of touch ; phenomena presented in one of our senses may be translated into phenomena presentable only in another ; and all may be read in the Language of Vision. The phenomena of our present senses, if those of the Micromegas of Voltaire were added to the number, might become significant of numberless qualities of matter that are now unimaginable by men. But all this would be only a discovery of additional signs, or natural causes ; but those so-called causes, Berkeley would say, are not causes. Their constant connection, or mutual symbolism, under laws of nature, is itself the effect of an invisible Agency, which the symbolism may either conceal or reveal, according to the spiritual state of the interpreter. The remarkable characteristic of sensuous phenomena is, not merely that they "suggest" absent phenomena and absent things, but that they, in a faith that is found reasonable, enable us to communicate with other living beings, and that

they reveal Omnipresent Mind. Faith is latent in sense; reason is latent in faith. The faith on which we rest, when we presuppose interpretability in the phenomena of sense, is latent reason; and it is the same latent reason that carries us on, through nature, or the material world, to the Divine reality. Is it consistent to trust, without proof, the faith on which all scientific interpretation of nature rests, and then to reject, because destitute of logical proof, the deeper faith, still more begotten of reason, on which the religious conception of the universe reposes? We all "live by faith," even when we exercise ourselves in the world of the senses.

Those noteworthy characteristics of what we see, touch, hear, taste, or smell, are brought more fully into light by Berkeley in this middle period of his life. He was exchanging the Lockian for the Platonic point of view. He was a stage nearer to the mystical Idealism advocated when he next gave his philosophic thought to the world, ten years later. In the meantime, he made much of free personal agency as the rational origin of the natural order which science postulates as dominant in the world of the senses, and which is trustfully presupposed in all scientific prevision and verification. But he used chiefly arguments of empiricism in vindication of the spiritual constitution of the universe, and on behalf of the unsubstantiality and powerlessness of the material world.

The contrast in the following sentences between "objects of sense" — which can only be signs, not real causes — and power proper, which with Berkeley transcends the continuous succession of phenomena

in nature, illustrates the point to which his thought was now approaching :—

"The *objects of sense*, being things immediately perceived, are called ideas. The *cause* of these ideas, or the power of producing them, is not the object of sense, not being itself perceived, but only inferred by reason from its effects—viz., from the objects or ideas which *are* perceived by sense. Hence it follows that the Power or Cause of ideas [*i.e.*, natural phenomena] is not an object of Sense, but of Reason. Whenever, therefore, the appellation of *sensible object* is used in a determined, intelligible sense [which can be realised in imagination], it is not employed to signify the absolutely existing outward Cause or Power, but the ideas produced thereby. Ideas which are observed to be connected together are vulgarly considered under the relation of cause and effect, whereas in strict philosophic truth they are only related as sign and the thing signified." [1]

Physical sciences are all confined to interpretation of the phenomena and phenomenal things of sense, under the interpretable relation of present sign and absent thing signified. They abstract from their sphere the Power in which sensible things, and their natural laws, originate, and through which they receive final rational explanation. The Power on which the whole depends, to which the ever-passing, but to us useful, phenomena of the natural world are to be referred, is concerned with what lies outside the expectations of sense, and above the inductive generalisations of sciences which deal exclusively with sensible events. The sphere of scientific causation (if we are still to call it causation), while not inconsistent with, lies within the more comprehensive

[1] 'Theory of Vision Vindicated,' § 11.

sphere of originative causation, which is efficient and final.

"As to the outward Cause of these ideas [*i.e.*, natural phenomena and the things which they compose], whether it be one and the same, or various and manifold; whether it be thinking or unthinking, spirit or body, or whatever else we conceive about it, the visible appearances [*i.e.*, the sensible things and their laws, which alone concern physical science] do not alter their nature. Though I may have an erroneous notion of the Cause, and though I may be utterly ignorant of *its* nature, yet this does not hinder my making true and certain judgments about my ideas [*i.e.*, the natural phenomena with which alone sense and natural science are concerned];—my knowing which of them are the same, and which different; wherein they agree, and wherein they disagree; which are connected together, and wherein this connection consists; whether it be founded in a likeness of nature, in a geometrical necessity, or merely in experience and custom."[1]

Theological inferences, in short, are irrelevant to natural science, which grows up out of "suggestions" that are evoked, according to Berkeley, by custom or past experience. Science, concerned with the sense symbolism only—that is to say, with the ordered phenomena—has nothing to do with the invisible Power on which the phenomenal order finally depends; for our perceptions by the senses, and our merely scientific inferences from them, will be the same, however we determine about their transcendent Active Reason. "Perhaps I think," he says, "that the same Being which causes our ideas of sight [*i.e.*, presents to us the things we see], doth not only cause our ideas of

[1] 'Theory of Vision Vindicated,' § 20.

touch likewise [*i.e.*, the things presented in touch], but also all our ideas of [*i.e.*, the ideas or phenomena presented to us in] all the other senses, with all the varieties thereof"—in short, external nature and its orderly constitution.[1]

So Berkeley's real world—in the deepest meaning of "real"—is not fully found in the world that is actually perceived in sense, or anticipated by sense suggestion. The sensible world could be for him only symbolic of a deeper and truer reality, though the phenomena of which our perceptions are significant were as varied in kind as those presented to Micromegas in the enlarged material world imagined by Voltaire. The true reality is the Omnipresent Power to which the whole is at last to be referred.

Now, what can we say, or can we say anything, about the Omnipresent Power? It is in treating this question that Berkeley's analogical argument comes in.

His way of putting it might be something like this: We each of us find that we can, through the data of the five senses, discover other human beings, living and working outside of our own individual personality — the originating causes of effects for which they are responsible; as we are ourselves responsible for effects which we refer to the Ego as their free or responsible cause. By analogy with this, we find Active Intelligence involved in the regulation of the interpretable phenomena of the visible world, and so at the root of all the discoveries of physical science. It is true that we are dull—imperfectly awake to the perpetual presence of Omnipresent Spirit—and apt to refer

[1] 'Theory of Vision Vindicated,' § 29.

what is due to this to the mere signs present to the senses. For the supposed causes of sense are not causes, but only signs of absent phenomena which we call their effects, and which they enable us to anticipate. What is needed is that, through reflection, we should get our otherwise dormant common sense, or common reason, awakened to perceive the analogy. We are all ready to interpret the words of men, as signifying the external existence and activity of human spirits. Now in the visible world God is in a manner incarnate. The analogous intellectual obligation to recognise God incarnate in the sense symbolism of nature is apt, for obvious reasons, to be less felt; for the conviction of omnipresent Deity needs to be drawn forth by reflection and religious exercise. But when it is drawn forth, we find it impossible to deny that we daily "see God" —in the same way as we daily see our fellow-men; for even they, in strictness, cannot be seen, although their bodies can. The true spiritual person is always invisible.

Nor, he might say, is this sight of God, which we all have daily, the sight of unknowable Power. We find through our own experience what conscious life is, and the personal pronouns "I" and "you" are not words wholly void of meaning. We can attribute something like what we find in our own inner life to God, as well as to our fellow-men. Unperceived Matter, on the contrary, is Abracadabra. But "God" is more than a meaningless name—more than the Unknowable behind the sense symbolism of nature. God means the eternally sustaining Spirit—the active omnipresent Reason—involved in the universe. Of God's

constant agency we have the same *sort* of proof as we have of the existence of other men like ourselves, when we can say we "see" *them.* Of course we never see, and never can see, the conscious spirit, even when the body, as a visible thing, is presented to our senses; we can only perceive sensible appearances, which reason obliges us to recognise as the sign of an invisible spirit, numerically different from our own. We implicitly trust the phenomena of sense, when thus discharging their function of making us aware of the existence, and some of the inner life, of other human spirits like ourselves. We are strangely apt to distrust their exercise of an analogous office, in revealing to us the active reason of the Supreme Spirit, embodied in the physical order, although this Spirit is always present and everywhere active, while human spirits only act within a circumscribed sphere, and at intervals.

Berkeley insists that it is the duty of the philosopher to overcome this unreasonable distrust, because faith in God is more plainly a necessity of reason than the faith on which our rational assurance of the real existence of the persons around us who are signified by what we see depends. The spiritual world glimmers through the visible, in the very conditions of the visibility of things, when the material world is looked at in the light of the true theory of vision. Divine Reason is then found to be latent in sense.

"'Nothing,' says the sceptical Alciphron, 'so much convinces me of the existence of another person as *his speaking to me.* It is my hearing you talk that, in strict and philosophical truth, is to me the best argument for your being. And this is a peculiar argument, inapplicable to your pur-

pose ; for you will not, I suppose, pretend that God speaks to man in the same clear and sensible manner that one man doth to another ?'—'That,' Euphranor replies, 'is really, in truth, my opinion ; and it should be yours, too, if you are consistent with yourself, and abide by your own definition of language. . . . In consequence of your own sentiments and concessions, you have as much reason to think the Universal Agent or God speaks to your eyes, as you can have for thinking any particular person speaks to your ears. You stare to find that God is not far from any one of us, and that in Him we live, and move, and have our being. You who in the beginning of this our conference thought it strange that God [if He exists] should leave Himself without a witness, do now think it strange that the witness should be so full and clear.'—'I must own I do,' Alciphron is made to acknowledge. 'I never imagined it could be pretended that we saw God with our fleshly eyes as plain as we see any human person whatsoever, and that He daily speaks to our senses in a manifest and clear dialect.'—'This language of vision,' Crito interposes, 'has a necessary connection with knowledge, wisdom, and goodness. It is equivalent to a constant creation, betokening an immediate act of power and providence. The instantaneous production and reproduction of so many phenomenal signs, combined, dissolved, transposed, diversified, and adapted to such an endless variety of purposes, ever shifting with the occasions suited to them, doth set forth and testify the immediate operation of a Spirit or thinking Being.'"

But without previous assumption of omnipotent omnipresent goodness, this analogical reasoning, which Berkeley so beautifully unfolds, can carry us only to an inadequate conclusion. The phenomena of sight suggest that we are living within a Universal Power that operates according to rules ; but this in itself is no proof that the supposed order of the world is more than transitory, or

that the Power at work is worthy of trust. Why may not our whole experience be due to the operation of a malignant contriver, who finds pleasure in our temporary delusions, and through whose influence our faith in natural order is only inherited deception? Berkeley must presuppose the moral trustworthiness of the Spirit that is continually addressing us in the language of sense. This universal language itself, *as such*, affords no evidence of the veracity and goodness of the otherwise unknown speaker. Eternity, omnipresence, omnipotence, perfect trustworthiness, and absolute goodness, all presuppose faith or moral trust in reason, other than those expressed in an empirical argument from analogy. If we regard the question with the eye of natural science only, this vision of God fails to reach the foundation of reality.[1] What is our assurance of the true divinity of the visible God? We seem to have proved, by this analogy of the universal language of nature with the local languages of men, that men are in intercourse through their senses with a living Being, who has customary ways of acting, which we call natural laws; — but what of his absolute trustworthiness in the light of the mixture of good and evil which this planet presents? If we are to rest on wholly empirical analogies, Hume was surely warranted in thinking that the inference of "the universal energy and operation" of a divine or perfect Being is "too bold ever to carry conviction with it

[1] Natural and biological science, *per se*, is philosophically agnostic. Phenomena of sense, and *faith* in their phenomenal order, are its only data, while *faith* in what transcends and alone vindicates our faith in physical nature is put aside as unscientific.

to a man fully apprised of the weakness of human reason, and the narrow limits to which it is confined in all its operations." Though the chain of arguments which conducts to it was ever so logical, there must arise a strong suspicion that it has carried us beyond the reach of our faculties. We are got into fairyland; and *there* we have no reason to trust our common methods of argument, or to think that our usual analogies have any authority. Our line is too short to fathom such immense abysses.

An apprehension of this sort was perhaps at the bottom of the crude attempt of Descartes to prove by argument the validity of the faith that we are living in a universe that is virtually the language of Omnipotent Goodness. For it was an expression of felt need for evidence that we are not the sport of a malignant Being, who finds pleasure in our illusions, —the need for evidence that experience may not, instead of a well ordered dream, turn out to be in the end a deceptive dream. Berkeley was bound to go deeper than the sensuous data of experience could carry him, in order to show the reasonableness of absolute trust in the Power that it had been the governing thought of his life to realise as "not far from any one of us," for "in Him we live, and move, and have our being."

PERIOD III.—1734–53.

CHAPTER I.

MATHEMATICS, SOCIAL ECONOMY, MEDICINE, AND PHILOSOPHY AT CLOYNE.

In May 1734, Berkeley returned to Ireland. Except occasional visits there, he had been a wanderer for more than twenty years. He returned to take possession of the bishopric of Cloyne. That remote region was now to be his home. The interest of the philosophic Queen, and some regard to what was due to him after the Bermuda disappointment, probably explains the mystery of an unworldly idealist appearing in high office in the Irish Church of the eighteenth century. He resumed life in his native island, to devote his benevolent sympathies to the service of his countrymen, and his mind to contemplation and search for truth.

Berkeley spent eighteen years of almost unbroken seclusion at Cloyne. The place itself suited an increasing inclination for a meditative and domestic life, which had probably been fostered by his circumstances in America. The eastern and northern part of the county of Cork formed his diocese. It was bounded on the

west by Cork harbour and the river Lee, and on the east by the beautiful Blackwater and the mountains of Waterford; the hills of Limerick protected it on the north; and the sea, which was its southern boundary, approached within two miles of his new home in the village of Cloyne. This is a compact territory, apart from the great currents of life, about twenty miles in length, and extending inwards about twelve miles from the coast. The interior consists of two nearly parallel limestone valleys, cultivated and fertile, but bare of timber. In one of these stood the cathedral, with the village, its round tower, and its 1500 inhabitants. What was then the bishop's residence may still be seen, screened from the road by shrubs and trees, whilst its other sides look towards a large garden, in which is a broad walk, Berkeley's favourite resort for meditative purposes, once lined by hedges of myrtles planted by his own hand. The name is significant, as well as the place—for Cloyne, in its original meaning, is a cave or place of retirement.

Here in the summer of 1734 Berkeley was settled, "continuing his studies with unabated attention." Plato and Hooker were among his constant companions. The Cloyne life seems soon to have become a sedentary one, with increasing ill-health. Idealising his new home, he saw charms around it not so obvious to the ordinary eye. Travelling was now irksome to him, and he was almost as much removed as he had been at Rhode Island from the living world of letters. Cork took the place of Newport, but Cork was twenty miles from Cloyne, while Newport was only three from Whitehall. His episcopal neighbour at Cork at first was Dr Peter Browne, Provost at Trinity College a quarter of a cen-

tury before, and lately engaged with him in controversies of theological philosophy. The county squires and their families, as we find, supplied most of the society. Among the neighbouring clergy, Isaac Gervais, one of the prebendaries of Lismore, and afterwards Dean of Tuam, was a frequent correspondent and visitor, who enlivened the episcopal residence by his wit. Secker, the common friend of Berkeley and Butler, now Bishop of Bristol, and Benson, the Bishop of Gloucester, whom he had known in Italy, now and then exchanged letters with him.[1] Cloyne was far from the life of courts, or colleges, or the coffee-houses of London, and with the pensive sound of the ocean to interrupt its silence. Swift was wearing out an unhappy old age, and Pope was almost the sole survivor of the brilliant society in which Berkeley had moved in other days. There are no remains of Cloyne correspondence with Pope. We are told, indeed, that its beauty was pictured to the bard of Twickenham by the pen that in former days had described Ischia, so that Pope had almost determined to make a visit to Ireland to see a place which his friend had painted out to him with all the brilliancy of colouring, though to common eyes it presents not much that is worthy of admiration.

One finds almost no trace of impression made by Berkeley at Cloyne. An episcopal successor writes, that

[1] In a letter from Bishop Secker, in February 1735, we read: "Your friend Mr Pope is publishing small poems every now and then, full of much wit, and not a little keenness. Our common friend Dr Butler hath almost completed a set of speculations upon the credibility of religion from its analogy to the constitution and course of nature, which I believe in due time you will read with pleasure." Butler's 'Analogy' appeared in the year after.

"of Berkeley little is remembered." His ways were too quiet to strike, and his thought was too subtle to be appreciated by the squires and peasants of Imokilly. The recluse student, of cosmopolitan aspirations, whose mind was habitually in regions where it was difficult to follow him, left no deep local mark.

One interruption to this secluded and domestic life was in the autumn of 1737, when he went to Dublin for a few months to attend the Irish House of Lords. This seems to have been the last year in which he went beyond the limits of the county of Cork till he left it to return no more. Infirm in health, he lived year after year happy in his home, devoted to books and to his thoughts. His letters give pleasant pictures of the family life. Of his only daughter he writes: "So bright a little gem! were it only to prevent her doing mischief among the illiterate squires, I am resolved to treat her like a boy, and make her study eight hours a-day." The love of art, as well as the love of truth, so conspicuous in his youth, followed him into his contemplative old age, and was encouraged among his children. He had no ear for music himself, but music was an enthusiasm in the family, and he retained Signor Pasquilino for years to teach his children. It was then that the Signor, who had been learning English from a dictionary, exclaimed in an outbreak of gratitude, "May God *pickle* your lordship!" The county neighbours were often invited into the palace for concerts of music, and to enjoy pictures by the French and Italian masters with which it was adorned.

In 1734 Berkeley was getting involved in what

sounded like a mathematical controversy only. It was really one form of the periodical collision between faith and human science. His "Commonplace Book" shows that the metaphysical principles which underlie mathematical reasoning had interested him at Trinity College. In the 'Treatise on Human Knowledge,' in the tract on the 'Cause of Motion,' and in the 'Alciphron,' he had maintained that the words "space" and "time" have a positive or real meaning only so far as their meaning can be reduced to concrete phenomena, and that absolute space is meaningless. Baxter had argued that, to be consistent with himself, Berkeley was logically bound "to suspect that even mathematics may not be very sound knowledge at the bottom." And it happened that in those London years after the return from Rhode Island, his attention was drawn to a plea for scepticism about religion which some mathematicians thought they found in its mysteriousness, followed by a demand for reasonable explanation. So we find him telling his friend Tom Prior, in January, that though his "health then hindered reading," he could "think as well as ever;" and that "for amusement" he "passed his early hours in certain mathematical matters which might possibly produce something." The issue was the 'Analyst,' which appeared early in 1734. This little book led to a controversy, in part purely mathematical, in which Jurin, Pemberton, Benjamin Robins, Colin M'Laurin, Walton, and other distinguished mathematicians shared, which left its mark in last century.

The 'Analyst' is an ingenious example of the *argumentum ad hominem*. The argument is that even

boasted mathematical science can logically justify its own fundamental axioms as little as theology; seeing that its covert assumptions are as mysterious as those of the theologian. Hence religious thought is after all in no worse position in this respect than mathematics, the most certain of the sciences. Part of the reasoning resembles that brought forward in the seventh dialogue of 'Alciphron,' where it is argued that some words have another office than that of suggesting pictures in the imagination, because they refer to what is unimaginable. Yet these same words legitimately influence our feelings and our actions. As a Kantist might say, they belong to the sphere of the practical reason, operative in the region of supersensible truth. For Berkeley in this implies that, at the root of positive knowledge and of all the sciences, there are practical principles which cannot be resolved into imaginable meaning, and which it is unreasonable to insist on translating into impressions of sense, or corresponding pictures of imagination. Theology and science are thus far on the same footing. "Force," for instance, is as incomprehensible a word in natural philosophy as "grace" is in theology; yet each is useful, for each has a practical, though not an imaginable, meaning. The case is similar with the mathematical infinite. Mathematicians cannot translate into consistent imaginable meaning some of their own conclusions about fluxions. If our science of God is rooted in mysteries, so, too, are the demonstrable sciences of number and space and time. Modern analysts, in their scientific discoveries, must proceed upon what is realisable only as mystery; they have therefore no right to reject theology, merely because

reasoners about religion make a demand on faith or trust similar to what they do themselves. The argument comes to this, that all human knowledge—mathematical or theological,—whether about things and their relations in space, or about God—must lose itself at last in mysterious convictions, which legitimately influence life and action, but which cannot be translated into ideas of imagination, or freed from incoherence when measured by sensuous understanding only.

This seems to be the drift of Berkeley's argument, but without a full philosophical recognition of his own position. His inclination to push thought to the verge of paradox led him, moreover, to less defensible conclusions than the preceding, in the 'Analyst' controversy. He was not satisfied to show the ultimate incomprehensibility of the principles and reasonings of mathematicians; he speaks as if the science of fluxions involved what is absolutely self-contradictory, and not merely relatively mysterious, under the inevitable conditions of all human science.

The endless "condition of Ireland" question attracted Berkeley almost as soon as he was settled in Cloyne. The South Sea disaster had first distinctly revealed the philanthropic ardour which was still more conspicuous in his American enterprise. Now, in the south of Ireland he found a large population of native Irish—a religious people, with strong ideas of race; and settled among them a small society of English colonists, separated in race and religion. The aborigines, long ruled in the interest of the stranger, had become unable to rule themselves. The self-reliance which, fifteen years be-

fore, he had preached as the only "means for preventing the ruin of Great Britain," was above all needed in Ireland, where the gospel of self-supporting work was unknown, and where the simplest maxims of economy were unpractised. The Protestant bishops were not then self-sacrificing leaders in enterprises which aimed at the good of the whole Irish nation; but Berkeley was not hindered by ecclesiastical conventionality. Musing on the misfortunes of Ireland, he rose from the particular case to general principles, and worked his way to much that is true in economic science, forty years before Adam Smith published the 'Wealth of Nations,' and ten years before David Hume produced his political essays.

The result characteristically appeared in the form of a small volume of queries. The First Part of Berkeley's 'Querist' was published in Dublin, 1735. It was followed by other two Parts in the two following years.

The 'Querist' shows characteristic humour and sagacity, and is still interesting, though some of its lessons would now be rejected as economical fallacies. He dreaded imports and luxurious expenditure, as a cause of loss, and acted as well as wrote for the encouragement of home-made productions of every kind: his own dress and that of his family was made in the village of Cloyne. He advocated paper money, and maintained that industry was the only source of wealth, the true idea of money being that of "a ticket or counter." The 'Querist' abounds in maxims of large and generous regard for the whole Irish population. "Berkeley," says Sir James Mackintosh, "was the first eminent Protestant, after the unhappy contest at the Revolution,

who avowed his love for all his countrymen. His patriotism was not, like Swift's, confined to a colony of English. The 'Querist' perhaps contains more hints, then original, still unapplied in legislation and political economy, than are to be found in any equal space." Here are a few examples:—

"Whether the creating of wants be not the likeliest way to produce industry in a people? Whether a scheme for the welfare of this nation should not take in the whole inhabitants? Whether it is not a vain attempt to project the flourishing of our Protestant gentry, exclusive of the bulk of the natives? Whether, in imitation of the Jesuits in Paris, who admit Protestants to study in their colleges, it may not be right for us also to admit Roman Catholics into our college, without obliging them to attend chapel duties, or catechisms, or divinity lectures? Whether the fable of Hercules and the carter ever suited any nation like this nation of Ireland? Whether there ever was, is, or will be, an industrious nation poor, or an idle rich? Whether it were not wrong to suppose land, or gold and silver either, to be wealth? Whether we can propose to thrive so long as we entertain a wrong-headed distrust of England?"

Some years after Berkeley settled in Cloyne, the neighbourhood was ravaged by famine and fever. Numbers of the poor perished. Dark months of suffering, in the winter of 1739, had consequences of lasting interest in his mental history. They curiously gave rise in this wise to a new development of the ideal Realism of his youth. The many deaths among his neighbours led him to search for a remedy. He had been proposing medicine for the body social; he now wanted to find a medicine for the bodily organism on which the happiness and vigour of the embodied human spirit

depends. Some American experience reminded him of wonderful medicinal properties of tar, especially tar dissolved in water. The American Indians believed in tar as a panacea for the ills of flesh. Some of his own experiments seemed to verify this large conception. It seems that he had for some time been immersed in Platonic and Neoplatonic studies, and was learning to recognise the Common Reason as the Divine Principle or Agent, adumbrated in the phenomenal world of sense, and in the established laws of nature. An eccentric ingenuity united these two subjects in his thought, — a supposed natural law according to which tar-water seemed to be universally medicinal, and the Power that is universally at work in the universe. He made experiments with tar-water. Its success in some diseases encouraged him to try it in others, and with a result that seemed to correspond to his expectations. He mused over the question why tar-water should be universally beneficial. The hypothesis occurred that tar must be charged to an extraordinary degree with "pure invisible fire, the most subtle and elastic of bodies," — the vital element of the universe; and water might be the natural means by which the true element of life was to be drawn off from tar, and communicated to vegetable and animal organisms. Still, the vital fire, however interesting from the point of view of natural science and medical art, and however wide its medicinal applications, could, after all, at his philosophical point of view, be only a natural sign, or physical cause. Its originating cause, and the cause of all its so-called effects, must be the Universal or Divine Power.

This speculation awoke in Berkeley the imaginative enthusiasm of which he had so large a store, and which, with a certain excess in each instance, had been drawn throughout his life in different directions by favourite ideals. It was now kindled by a supposed discovery which seemed to mitigate, if not in the end completely to remove, the physical suffering of the world, and thus open a marvellous vista of happiness for mankind in their present state of embodied conscious life. The enthusiasm was natural to one so susceptible and benevolent. The corporeal organism and the conscious spirit in man are so connected—at least in this mortal life—that what invigorates the human body also supplies new resources of intelligence and spiritual life for the common good. Human beings with bodies more fully charged with the vital element might make unprecedented advances in the struggle with prejudice and vice, and the future history of mankind might thus become a happy contrast to its past. Berkeley had himself suffered for years from a complication of maladies, by which his old energy had been impeded. This might now be restored. The whole conception awakened a fervid enthusiasm for tar-water, and a missionary zeal in the proclamation of its virtues hardly inferior to that with which, twenty years before, he had projected the Christian civilisation of North America. It became the ruling passion of the closing years of his life. He set up an apparatus for manufacturing tar-water at Cloyne. It was the one medicine in his household; and he tried, by offering it in new and more palatable forms, and by surrounding it with a halo of imagination, to make the nauseous drug the

one great medicine for his neighbours and for the world.

In 1744 this tar-water enthusiasm brought him out for the last time as an author in metaphysical philosophy. The most memorable consequence of the famine and fever of 1739 has been the curious volume of aphorisms, in which Berkeley made the effects of the supposed panacea an occasion for a chain of meditative thoughts upon the Power at work in the material world, and upon the unity of the universe in God. The narrower *ideaism* of his youth now tended towards an all-comprehensive Idealism, as he went on to unfold principles of rational connection, which, in making human knowledge possible, enable us to rise from physical science into philosophical theology. The shadows of sense seemed to vanish more than ever, in the blaze of this new revelation of the Eternal Spirit, in and through whom all changes in nature are connected, as in the ascending links of a continuous chain.

In the spring of 1744, accordingly, a notable book made its appearance, entitled 'A Chain of Philosophical Reflections and Inquiries concerning Tar-Water, and divers other subjects connected together and arising out of one another.' The book had a great run for some years. No former work of Berkeley so soon or so widely engaged general attention. A second edition, under the name of 'Siris,' or the Chain,[1] appeared a few weeks after the first. Tar-water, here proclaimed to be "of a nature so mild and benign and proportioned to the human constitution, as to warm without heating,

[1] Σειρὰ, a chain.

and to cheer but not inebriate,"[1] became the fashion everywhere. Manufactories of the panacea were established in Dublin and London, as well as in different places on the Continent and in America. Professional physicians resented the philosophical and ecclesiastical intrusion into their province. Pamphlets were published to discredit the new medicine, and these provoked replies. A tar-water controversy ensued,—not less prolific than 'Alciphron' and the 'Analyst' had been in the controversy with mathematical free-thinkers. The contagion spread to other countries. 'Siris' was translated into French, German, Dutch, and Portuguese. Tar-water was often alluded to in the correspondence and literature of the time. "A panacea," Fielding remarks years afterwards, "one of the greatest of scholars and best of men did lately apprehend that he had discovered. It is true he was no physician; and yet perhaps no other modern hath contributed so much to make his physical skill useful to the public. I mean the late Bishop of Cloyne, and the discovery is that of the virtues of tar water."

The popularity of 'Siris' during Berkeley's life was due, not to the metaphysics so curiously engrained in it, but to its supposed discovery of a fact in physics which was to produce a revolution in medicine. The supposed discovery passed into oblivion when experience failed to verify it, and when the promised panacea was reduced to the comparatively humble position assigned to tar in

[1] Siris, § 217. So Cowper afterwards—

"The cups
That cheer, but not inebriate, wait on each."

—The Task, Bk. iv. 39.

the modern pharmacopœia. With his characteristic impetuosity, Berkeley had forgotten Bacon's contrast of the two ways of searching for physical truth. "The one flies from the senses and particulars to the highest generalisations, which it too readily takes for granted, and proceeds at once to apply, for the discovery of middle axioms. The other draws its principles cautiously from the senses and particulars, rising by a gradual and unbroken ascent, so that it reaches the highest generalisations last of all."[1] On the other hand, the metaphysical idealism which Berkeley mixed up with his medical physics, interesting as it is, as a mystical expression of the religious thought in which his ideal realism culminated—God, concealed by sense, yet revealed in Sense — was too foreign to the prevailing modes of thought in the eighteenth century to engage sympathy. So for a long time it left no mark in the history of thought.

The tone of 'Siris' is in a marked way different from that which prevails in the productions of the middle, and still more in the early, part of Berkeley's life. With some of the old disposition to exaggerate a single element in the complex constitution of things, there is an increase of tolerance, and a philosophical eclecticism hitherto wanting. There is less determination to see the final solution of the difficulties of philosophy in his own early and narrowly argued conception of material things, as in themselves unsubstantial and impotent. He now recognises that there is more in the universe for the philosopher to think about than that *esse* is *percipi*. This favourite conclusion of former years is

[1] 'Novum Organum.'

now insinuated, more modestly, as the beginning rather than the outcome of the philosopher's insight into reality. Plato and a wider experience had taught him that the universe in which we find ourselves living is not so easily divested of its ultimate mysteriousness as it seemed in long past days in Dublin. This feeling of its mysteriousness had been growing upon him; we can trace it through 'Alciphron' and in the 'Analyst.' The effort of human thought to soar in the empyrean of pure intellect divorced from sense is met by a confession of intellectual collapse. It was as with "the buoyant dove" of Kant's illustration, which, when with free wing it traverses the air of which it feels the resistance, is apt to imagine it might fly still better in the vacuum beyond. "So Plato," Kant goes on to say, "forgets and looks slightingly on the sensible world, because it imposes on his reason such narrow limitations, and ventures on the wings of Ideas into the empty space of pure intellect. He has not remarked that in spite of his efforts he makes no progress; for he has no point of support on which to uphold him in his attempt to bear the understanding out of its natural place." It was like this with transcendent Idealism in 'Siris.' Inability to advance in the region to which he had betaken himself, compared with his easy argumentative career when demonstrating the dependent nature of sensible things, disposed him more to theological and philosophical eclecticism. He welcomed religious faith in any form of thought consistent with the supremacy of Active Reason in the universe. Altogether, in whatever way the mental change may be explained, he looks larger and more

liberal, more grave and mystical, but with less argumentative acuteness, in 'Siris,' with its undigested conceptions culled from ancient and medieval thinkers. He leaves us at the end with the parting thought that "in this mortal state we must be satisfied to make the best of those glimpses of truth within our reach;" yet encouraged by his own experience to add that "the eye by long use comes to see even in the darkest cavern," and that there is "no subject so obscure but we may discern some glimpse of truth by long poring on it." He has found too that "truth is the cry of all, but the game of only a few. Certainly where it is the chief passion, it doth not give way to vulgar cares and views; nor is it contented with a little ardour in the early time of life, active perhaps to pursue, but not so fit to weigh and revise. He that would make a real progress in knowledge must dedicate his age as well as youth, the later growth as well as first-fruits, at the altar of truth." Such was the spirit in which Berkeley lived at Cloyne. Instead of vehement controversial pursuit of a favourite thought into logical consequences which were to resolve all philosophical differences and difficulties—as in the 'Principles' and the 'Three Dialogues'—we have in 'Siris' an unfinished weighing and revision of the whole, the fruit of years given to reading and contemplative thought.

A vein of melancholy runs through his life in the years that follow. Attempts were made in vain to induce him to exchange the seclusion and supposed gloom of Cloyne for episcopal preferment that would engage him more in society. But he showed himself the same "absolute philosopher with regard to

money, titles, and power," that Swift had described him more than twenty years before. "A greater income would not tempt me to remove from Cloyne," he writes to Tom Prior in 1746, "or to set aside my Oxford scheme, which was delayed by the illness of my son; yet I am as intent upon it and as much resolved as ever. The truth is, I have a scheme of my own for this long time past in which I propose more satisfaction and enjoyment to myself than I could in that high station."[1] He was "no man's rival" in these matters. "I am not in love with feasts, and crowds, and visits, and late hours, and strange faces, and a hurry of affairs often insignificant. For my private satisfaction, I had rather be master of my own time than wear a diadem. As for the argument from the opportunity of doing good, I observe that duty obliges men in high stations to decline occasions of doing good, but duty doth not oblige men to solicit high stations."

In 1751 a deep sorrow visited the beautiful home-life, in the death of the second son, William, at the age of sixteen. The loss was thought to have struck too close to his father's heart. "I was a man," so he writes,[2] "retired from the amusement of politics, visits, and what the world calls pleasure. I had a little friend, educated under mine own eye, whose painting delighted me, whose music ravished me, and whose lively gay spirit was a continual feast. It has pleased God to take him hence. God, I say, in mercy hath deprived me of this pretty gay plaything. His parts and person, his innocence and piety, his particularly uncommon affection for me, had

[1] The Primacy, to which he was urged to aspire.
[2] March 8, 1751.

gained too much upon me. Not content to be fond of him, I was vain of him. I had set my heart too much upon him—more, perhaps, than I ought to have done upon anything in this world."

The last of his letters which remains was addressed to Dean Gervais. It expresses the sombre sentiment with which, in April 1752, he was looking to the close of his recluse life in the "serene corner" in which he spent eighteen years. "We have often wanted your enlivening company to dissipate the gloom of Cloyne. This I look on as enjoying France at second hand. I wish anything but the gout could fix you among us. For my own part, I submit to years and infirmities. My views in this world are mean and narrow; it is a thing in which I have small share, and which ought to give me small concern. I abhor business, and especially to have to do with great persons and great affairs, which I leave to such as you, who delight in them and are fit for them. The evening of life I choose to pass in a quiet retreat. Ambitious projects, intrigues and quarrels of statesmen, are things I have been formerly amused with, but now they seem to be a vain, fugitive dream."

About four months after these words were written, Berkeley saw Cloyne for the last time He had formed a new project. The "life academico-philosophical," which he once sought to realise in Bermuda, he now hoped to find at Oxford.

CHAPTER II.

OXFORD.

In August 1752 Berkeley set out in quest of a retreat whose charm he had experienced during his first summer in England in 1713. He had visited Oxford then and afterwards. It had now for some time occupied his imagination as the ideal home of his old age. He found the occasion in having sent his son George there instead of to Dublin. This confirmed the desire to spend his remaining days in indulging that passion for academic retirement which had so strong a hold of him, and was really one of the motives of his American mission. In 1724 he wanted to resign a deanery, if it should interfere with what he longed for in Bermuda: he wanted now to resign a bishopric, that he might realise the beautiful vision in Oxford. He tried to exchange Cloyne for an Oxford headship or canonry. Failing in this, he put an unconditional resignation in the hands of the Secretary of State. The oddness of the proposal excited the curiosity of George the Second. When the king discovered by whom it was made, he said that his old friend Berkeley should die a bishop in spite of himself, but that he might live where he

pleased. And now in this month of August, in 1752, we find him with his wife and daughter on their way to the city of colleges, in the fair vale of the Isis and Cherwell, dear to sensibilities like his, with gathered memories of a thousand years.

He made his Will a few days before he left Cloyne, bequeathing any property he might have to his wife, with the characteristic injunction that "the expense of his funeral should not exceed twenty pounds." As it happened, what property he left was the scanty residue possible at the end of a life of large-hearted munificence, with its favourite motto—*non sibi sed toti.* One curious provision, requiring his body to be kept five days above ground, or longer, before it is buried, "even till it grow offensive by the cadaverous smell," shows that he had somehow conceived the possibility of being buried alive.[1] When he left Cork in the ship which carried his wife, his daughter, and himself to Bristol, he was prostrated by weakness, and had to be taken from the landing-place to Oxford on a horse-litter.[2] It was on the 25th August that the little party from Cloyne saw the domes and church towers around their new home, amidst the soft repose of the rural English scenery which he loved.

Our picture of Berkeley at Oxford is dim. According

[1] Perhaps on the suggestion of a curious little book I have lately stumbled upon, which had appeared in Dublin a few years before he died, entitled,—'The Uncertainty of the Signs of Death, and the Danger of Precipitate Interments Demonstrated' (Dublin, 1748). It contains a number of cases of persons thus buried alive, "and directions for preventing such accidents," almost in the words of Berkeley's Will.

[2] His friend Bishop Butler died at Bath a few weeks before this landing at Bristol.

to tradition, he lived with his family in a house in Holywell Street, near the gardens of New College, and not far from the cloisters of Magdalen. Oxford itself, in the middle of the eighteenth century, was living on the inherited glories of the past. Among the residents in 1752 hardly any name suggests more than mediocrity. His friend Dr Conybeare was Dean of Christ Church, and to him he had intrusted his son. Secker had now been bishop of Oxford for many years, and spent his summers at Cuddesden and his winters in London. A few years earlier Adam Smith had gone to study at Balliol; and in the spring of this year Edward Gibbon entered Magdalen to spend fourteen months,—according to his own account, "the most idle and unprofitable in his whole life." The torpor of the place was beginning to be moved by Wesley, whose sermons in St Mary's had denounced with evangelical fervour the frivolous life of the University. Through him and others Oxford became the source of the revival of one of the three schools of religious life which it is the characteristic glory of the Church of Hooker and Andrewes and Cudworth to unite within its ample fold; and the life of the other two was afterwards restored from the same academic centre by Newman and Arnold.

Berkeley resumed study at Oxford in improved health. In October a 'Miscellany containing several Tracts, by the Bishop of Cloyne,' appeared in London and Dublin. Except one — 'Farther Thoughts on Tar-Water' — it consisted of reprints of the 'De Motu' and other short pieces. A third edition of 'Alciphron' was published about the same time. This edition is remarkable for

omitting the sections in the seventh dialogue which contain a defence of the early Nominalism of the 'Principles,' probably because out of harmony with the Ideal Realism of 'Siris.'

Nothing remains to show how far the domestic seclusion in Holywell Street realised the dream of an academic retreat. At any rate the ideal life did not last long: he was suddenly confronted by the mystery of death. On the evening of Sunday the 14th of January 1753 he passed away without warning. His son told Dr Johnson,[1] in the most authentic account we have of the event, that,—"as he was sitting with my mother, sister, and myself, suddenly, and without the least previous notice or pain, he was removed to the enjoyment of eternal rewards; and although all possible means were instantly used, no symptom of life ever appeared after, nor could the physicians assign any cause for his death, as they were certain it was not an apoplexy. He arrived at Oxford on the 25th of August, and had received great benefit from the change of air, and by God's blessing on tar-water, insomuch that for some years he had not been in better health than he was the instant before he left us."

Six days after he died, he was buried in the Cathedral of Christ Church.

[1] In a letter dated Christ Church, October 16, 1753.

CHAPTER III.

SIRIS, OR THE UNITY OF THE UNIVERSE IN GOD.

BERKELEY's philosophical development assumes its latest form in 'Siris.' This was his last word in a lifelong endeavour—interrupted by his travels in Europe and America, and by ardent pursuit of social ideals — to reach the essentially reasonable view of the material world in its human and divine relations. In pondering 'Siris,' we naturally ask how far Berkeley's philosophic insight carried him; and whether, after including this, its final result, it is found to contribute what is of lasting value to the stock of the world's philosophical endeavour. True philosophy must be in harmony with all the facts of our complex, intellectual and moral, experience: it deserves acceptance, in proportion as it agrees with itself, and with the spiritual constitution of human experience: it lives in proportion to the energy of the faith by which it is animated.

'Siris,' Berkeley used to say, cost him more meditative thought and studious reading than any of his other books. This does not surprise one who examines its contents. It contains much that has been gathered on remote by-ways of past philosophy, as well as on the

main tracks. A growing inclination towards Platonism, especially in its Neoplatonic mystical form, and an affectionate sympathy with later Greek ways of thinking, are manifest on almost every page. The physical hypothesis of the universal efficacy of tar-water, associated by daily companionship with Plato and the Neoplatonists, led him, by subtle transitions, from the vital essence of plants and animals to the vital spirit of the universe; from that to the necessary dependence on Spirit of all merely natural causation or sense symbolism; and at last to recognition of the whole world, organic as well as inorganic, as realisable only in and through Active Spirit, the factor of reality. The outcome of 'Siris' is a struggle to apprehend in God the true ground of that mind dependent reality of the things of sense which had engaged the eager argumentative activity of his youth in Trinity College. This mental struggle finds expression in the curious "chain" of aphorisms, about the consequent interpretability of sensuous phenomena; about the dependence of space and time upon the contents of an experience which must be placed and dated, in order to a rational construction of its meaning; about the essential unreasonableness of a universe grounded in unintelligent fate; about the impossibility of satisfying the philosophising reason otherwise than by acknowledging, in one form or other, free rational Will, as the omnipresent cause of all change; and about the inexplicable mystery of triune Deity. Whether the Will thus supreme is "abstracted from the world of the senses, and to be considered by itself, as distinct from and presiding over the natural system;" or whether "the whole universe, including mind together with the

mundane body, is conceived to be God, and the creatures to be partial manifestations of the divine essence" — there is "no atheism," he is ready to grant, "in either case, whatever misconception there may be; so long as Mind or Intellect is understood to preside over, govern, and conduct the whole frame of things." In either way we have, within the transitory things of sense, a natural order that is steady, and a trustworthy higher government going on, with a moral purpose that is perfect. This Eternal Fact, however it may be expressed in thought, is what is meant by God.

The change of the point of view in 'Siris' is from negation to construction. Instead of the argumentative unsubstantiation of the things which surround us, we now have Divine Spirit in the foreground as their foundation and practical realisation. This change was accompanied by a significant verbal change. What in the 'Principles' are called "ideas" are in 'Siris' called "phenomena." "Idea," on the other hand, is used in 'Siris' almost always in its Platonic meaning. The early Sensuous Nominalism—expressed by the use of "idea" as synonymous with phenomenon presented in sense—is now transformed into a transcendent Ideal Realism, in which Berkeley appears as if vainly struggling to reach abstractions that are empty, because the help of the concrete imagination has been withdrawn. The Ideas of 'Siris' are not the "ideas" of Locke; nor Berkeley's own ideas or phenomena of sense, — "inert, inactive objects of perception." They are "self-existent, necessary, active principles." Neither are they the "abstract ideas" against which he argued so vehemently at Trinity College. As "abstract," these could

not be phenomena of sense or imagination; and yet being "ideas," which were only sensuous, they must be such. The inconsistency of a picturable representation of universality Berkeley in his youth was then fond of exposing. But the "Ideas" of 'Siris' are different. They are "most real beings, intellectual and unchangeable; and therefore more real than the fleeting, transient objects of sense; which, wanting stability, cannot be objects of science, much less of intellectual knowledge." The most refined human intellect, exerted to its utmost reach, can only seize "some imperfect glimpses" of the Ideas now dawning upon him, obscured as they are in this mortal life of sense by those inferior ideas that are corporeal and imaginable. This is his language now.

The text on which the metaphysical part of 'Siris' is a commentary, is the principle—assumed to be self-evident—that law or order in nature must itself be the effect or manifestation of eternally active and omnipresent Mind. The immediate occasion for commenting on this text was a supposed biological law, according to which the vital element contained in tar is the "natural cause" of healthy life in every diseased animal organism into which it is suitably introduced. This, if really a law of nature, would be only an example of the dependent causation with which alone biology can be concerned. All law or uniformity in nature exemplifies this sort of causation, which constitutes the material world. The philosophical question which lies behind this is, Whether people are rightly said to find causation at all in the merely physical

conditions that are popularly called causes? These, no doubt, it is the prime office of students of physical science to ascertain; in so doing they interpret divinely constituted nature, charged with its great unfulfilled prophecies. Is the interpretation of these natural prophecies, however, a discovery of what is *ultimately* involved in causation and power? Can we properly be said to have satisfied the search for cause, when we have only found that certain phenomena of sense about whose origin we are curious, issue as continuous sequences from certain antecedent phenomena.

The often-repeated answer to this question given in 'Siris' is, that we can in no instance whatever say that "cause" has been found, when only visible conditions, organic or otherwise, have been found. The phenomenal antecedent is itself, in every case, an effect. Each perceived or natural "cause" is itself a caused cause, and therefore not the real cause; for it presupposes other antecedents or conditions, without which it could not itself appear; and these in turn presuppose still ulterior physical antecedents, as their conditions, without which they could not be manifested; and so on, in an endless regress. But the greatest of all *effects* is the whole phenomenal or material world—the whole connected system of interpretable signs. If it were not so connected it would not be a cosmos; there could be no such thing as experience; at least the experience would be insane, unintelligible, chaotic. Everything then would be independent of everything else: indeed there could be no *things* at all; for each phenomenon would be independent of every other—isolated, and therefore incapable of becoming part of a real thing. The "world"

after the withdrawal of natural concatenation, incapable of being reasoned about, would at once dissolve, and its present reality would disappear in unintelligible sensations.

Still, the web of connected phenomena that is presupposed in science, and in ordinary experience too, does not contain within it, according to Berkeley, the Power we are in quest of, when we seek philosophically for the rational meaning of events. Real power cannot be found in isolated phenomena, nor in visible organisms, which are only aggregated phenomena. These no doubt send us in quest of the productive Power. But the established rules which the things of sense and sensible events obey, instead of satisfying us in this quest, are only so much added to the sum of facts that demand causal explanation. The true seat of causality is within the veil. It is in the supersensible; not among phenomena, nor in the empirical world of phenomena. Can we follow it within the veil?

That depends upon the possibility of our having knowledge that is more than sensuous, or at least on finding reason in a faith or trust that transcends the data of sense and physical law. The answer must proceed upon a theory of human knowledge. Berkeley did not attempt to supply this, or try to do what Kant tried afterwards: he did not deliberately set himself to settle the boundary within which human knowledge must be confined, in order to be real. Kant did this, and announced that on trial he found the purely intellectual road to transcendent reality barred—that there was no scope for the function of the understanding alone, in elaborating scientific knowledge a step beyond sense-

given phenomena and things. Intellect, according to Kant, has objective validity only so far as there are phenomena presented to it for to enter into and convert into science. Whenever men try to think beyond this, thought must collapse; there can be no positive conception. The causal craving, accordingly, is confined within this sphere. We are obliged, as rational beings, to assume a parent phenomenon, or caused cause in a chain of natural causation, for each new phenomenal birth; and we are forbidden, with a due regard to our own limits, to go outside the ever regressive range of caused causes, in quest of the absolute or terminating cause. If we do so, we are warned that, as we have then parted from the matter which gives reality to our conceptions, our judgments must become empty and invalid, leaving us without ground for either affirmation or denial.

Berkeley attempts none of this sort of criticism. His position in Siris is therefore not easy to define; nor the reason on which he rests in his ascent towards the world beyond sense. He seems always to imply that we have supersensible experience, and a footing within the supersensible region, in the conviction of his own spirituality, which, like Descartes, he had assumed in his 'Principles of Human Knowledge.' He had steadily maintained that we are conscious of ourselves as spirits—conscious of our spiritual individuality and continued identity. He had found in *himself* an example of an *originating* cause.[1]

[1] Thus Hume's total scepticism is no legitimate expansion of Berkeley's "Principles." Berkeley presents himself as an advocate of the common sense or common reason in his acknowledgment of faith or trust in the reality of his own spiritual personality.

He had latterly expressed this, by saying that, though we have no "idea" of ego or self—for self has not a picturable meaning—yet we do have *a* meaning which we signify by the personal pronouns;—we know practically what "I" means, and what "you" means. This intellectual apprehension of self was the bridge over which Berkeley passed, from the purely passive world of sensible things and caused causes, in which natural science has its home, into the world of free spiritual agency, where there is final rest and satisfaction for the causal craving. He might, perhaps, have explained causation thus: — The craving for a cause, which is satisfied in our moral consciousness of personal power, is evoked by the spectacle of changes. Reason obliges us to assume the orderliness or interpretability of their succession in a system of nature. But man cannot find final satisfaction in natural order. The search for natural causes would be an infinite search—for each natural cause must be in turn an effect. To see the rationality of the whole spectacle, we must recognise the omnipresent agency of Spirit. We thus assume in the Macrocosm what we found in embryo in the microcosm — Active Reason — in which each individual spirit may be said to participate, and in which all live and move and have their being.

It is through causality in this its divine meaning that the changing things of sense are concatenated, in subordination to the Divine Spirit; so that there is a *reliable* connection between the present, the past, and the future. Without this reliable connection, which is the essence of reasonableness in things, not only is natural order at an end, but all the objects of sense must dis-

solve in chaos. The particular manner of their constitution, and the natural laws according to which they resolve into physical system, are no doubt "arbitrary," at the human point of view. But that there should be constitution and law of some kind among phenomena is not arbitrary, in as far as it is essential to the conception of a universe. Divine order is indeed presupposed in all our intercourse with nature, which is sustained by the faith that Active Reason is at the root of all. There may be no absolute necessity in the present constitution and connections: but there is need for intelligible constitution of some sort; for this is involved in the faith in the moral trustworthiness of the Omnipresent Power that is presupposed in the interpretability of nature. The principle of causality, so understood, is the universal form of the original faith out of which human knowledge arises, and on which human experience depends for its validity.

Our scientific discoveries of the invariable connections of coexistence and succession which now hold good in nature, Berkeley, in his juvenile arguments, had founded upon sense and its "suggestions." The human obligation to refer the material world and its laws to Omnipotent Reason, as cause efficient and final, was now recognised by him as due to something higher than the blind, custom-induced, tendency to suggest. "To be suggested," he had already said in his 'Vindication of Visual Language,' "is one thing, and to be inferred is another. Things are suggested and perceived by sense. We make judgments and inferences by the understanding: we infer causes from effects, effects from causes, and properties one

from another, where the connection is necessary."[1] In this there was an approach to the recognition of universalising reason, as an element presupposed in sense, yet superior to mere sense, which appears more fully in 'Siris.'

Here are some expressions by which in 'Siris' the claims of the supersensible necessities of intellect and the spirit, which give stability and cohesion to natural experience, are enforced:—

"Though it be supposed the chief business of a natural philosopher to trace out causes from their effects, yet this is to be understood not of agents, but of component parts in one sense, or of laws or rules in another. In strict truth all agents are incorporeal, and as such are not properly of physical consideration. . . . The mechanical philosopher inquires properly concerning the rules or modes of operation alone, and not concerning the cause; forasmuch as nothing mechanical is or really can be a cause. . . . It passeth with many, I know not how, that mechanical principles give a clear solution of the phenomena. 'The Democritic hypothesis,' saith Dr Cudworth, 'doth more handsomely and intelligibly solve the phenomena than that of Aristotle or Plato.' But, things rightly considered, perhaps it will not be found to solve any phenomena at all. . . . Those principles do not solve — if by solving is meant assigning the real, either efficient or final cause of appearances—but only reduce them to general rules. There is a certain analogy, constancy, and uniformity in the phenomena or appearances of nature, which are a foundation for general rules: and these rules are a grammar for the understanding of nature, or that series of effects in the visible world whereby we are enabled to foresee what will come to pass in the natural course of things. . . . As this natural connection of signs with the

[1] 'Vindication,' § 42.

things signified is regular and constant, it forms a sort of rational discourse, and is therefore the immediate effect of an intelligent cause."

Biological or physical psychology of course, on this view, shares the fate of other merely natural explanations, which in truth reveal only the provisional conditions of change. The "modes of motion of the cerebral substance," of which Huxley speaks,[1] are connected only as sign and thing signified with their correlative states of consciousness. An established connection of this sort, even if it could be verified of every conscious act and state through which man passes, would simply reveal certain rules in the system of natural changes, which evolve under their customary conditions. It does not include the Power to which this and every other part of nature's language of sensible signs is to be referred; although the previsive inferences with which in that case our organism would be charged might be put to much useful account in the medical management of our bodies. And this is so, whether we read the phenomena in terms of matter and motion or in terms of felt sensation. Sensations are in themselves as empty of originating power as motions. They are as remote as motions themselves from moral causation and intending will.

In 'Siris' Berkeley more than ever turns his thought towards hyper-phenomenal reality. It had been the chief endeavour of his early life to dispel the supposition of active originating power in "matter"; and to do this by showing the irrationality of the supposition that Matter

[1] Huxley's 'Hume,' pp. 76-82.

is realisable without active percipient Spirit as the one realising factor. The "activity of Matter," he tried to demonstrate, must be the activity of omnipresent Mind; and if all "action" throughout the world of sense were acknowledged to be the action of Mind or Spirit, he would probably have been satisfied with this acknowledgment, as a sufficient *unsubstantiation* of Matter.

But he does not say that all the action in the universe is the exclusive action of One Spirit, who would thus be the One Substance, and the only Agent in existence. Berkeley abundantly acknowledged other spiritual agents besides God. He did not intend to refer the evil in the universe to God. On the contrary, unlike Spinoza, he recognised the existence of genuine agents, finite yet responsible, subject to a moral government that is conducted partly through the medium of the visible order. In referring, for instance, to the presence of reason in natural changes, and in unconscious instincts and habits of mankind, while asserting that "unknowing nature" is not their origin, he adds that "the true inference is, that neither is the self-thinking individual or *human* person their real author." Why? Because, "in fact, no man *blames himself* if they are wrong, or *values himself* if they are right."[1] These words seem to imply that personal responsibility is the test for distinguishing agency of men, who may act wickedly, or free from the agency of the Universal Power.

Although Berkeley's eye was thus turned to the supersensible, towards which he was disposed to take his intellectual flight, he felt, more I think than in his

[1] 'Siris,' § 257.

ardent youth, the impediments to omniscience on the side of man:—

"Human souls in this low situation, bordering on mere animal life, bear the weight and see through the dusk of a gross atmosphere, gathered from wrong judgments daily passed, false opinions daily learned, and early habits of an older date than either judgment or opinion. Through such a medium the sharpest eye cannot see clearly. And if by some extraordinary effort the mind should surmount this dusky region, and snatch a glimpse of pure light, she is soon drawn backwards, and depressed by the heaviness of the animal nature to which she is chained. And if again she chanceth, amidst the agitations of wild fancies and strong affections, to spring upwards, a second relapse speedily succeeds into this region of darkness and dreams. Nevertheless, as the mind gathers strength by repeated acts, we should not despond, but continue to exert the prime and flower of our faculties, still recovering, and reaching on, and struggling into the upper region; whereby our natural weakness and blindness may be in some degree remedied, and a taste attained of truth and intellectual life."[1]

'Siris' is a dim adumbration of the philosophy of Causation, *first* in its physical relations, and *next* in its metaphysical or theological, presented in aphorisms, unsystematic and often mystical, or in which the thought is buried under references to antiquated physics and metaphysics. The gold has to be separated from the dross.

Throughout one half of the book we are asked to contemplate phenomena of sense undergoing transformation into other phenomena of sense, in a succession of orderly metamorphoses: this is the language of nature, which physical science seeks to interpret. The other

[1] 'Siris,' §§ 340, 341.

or spiritual side of things is then turned towards us: we are made to see as through a glass darkly all natural causes resolving themselves into the unity of Divine Reason and Will as their true ground: with this side of things theology or metaphysics has to do. Thus there is the scientific way of looking at the universe, in which it is seen to be a system of significant, and therefore interpretable, appearances—language that in one view is arbitrary, but which must be language; for unless the appearances were trustworthy interpretable signs, there could be no such thing as experience. But there is also the moral or spiritual constitution of the Whole. Towards this we are struggling when we aspire beyond interpretable phenomena that can be placed and dated, and look towards the universal rational agency in which they all centre; itself uncaused, and therefore causally inexplicable, since for Reason no reason can be given other than itself. The conception of causality, first applied to the material universe, thus becomes *at last* the expression of faith in omnipresent eternally active Spirit or Reason, as that in which the universe in which we find ourselves is rooted. "He who supposes all things to be ordered rationally, or by Mind, should not pretend to assign any other *necessary* cause for them."[1]

It follows on this metaphysic of causation, which surely contains rudiments of truth, that scientific faith — concerned with coexistence and succession among phenomena, and religious faith — concerned with universalising reason and moral agency, can be in divine harmony with one another. The law of phenomenal

[1] 'Siris'—*passim.*

evolution, or of continuous integration and disintegration, or any supposable law in nature, is as little at variance with the theological conception of things as the law of gravitation. Law or order is the grammar of the divine language of which the universe is the utterance. Yet an eye always directed to physical causation, even in sincere lovers of truth, becomes blind to the facts and postulates of moral experience, which transcend physical science; in like manner as, at an opposite extreme, the narrow vision of some theologians repudiates, as atheistic materialism, the universality of law, and finds room for Divine Providence only in irregularity.

The contrast and correlation of Sense and Intellect is another way of expressing the double aspect of causation; and the train of thought in 'Siris' often assumes this form. Some pregnant expressions are used when it does so. Here is one which, in anticipation of Kant, implies that natural science and even common experience presuppose uniting reason:—

"Strictly the sense knows nothing. We perceive indeed sounds by hearing, and characters by sight. But we are not therefore said to understand them. After the same manner, the phenomena of nature are alike visible to all; but all have not alike learned the connection of natural things, or understand what they signify, or know how to vaticinate by them."[1]

Again:—

"Sense and experience acquaint us with [*i.e.*, accustom us to] the course and analogy of appearances or natural effects.

[1] 'Siris,' § 253.

Thought, reason, intellect introduce us into the knowledge of their causes. Sensible appearances, though of a flowing, unstable, and uncertain nature, yet having first occupied the mind, they do, by an easy prevention, render the after-task of thought more difficult; and as they amuse the eyes and ears, and are more suited to vulgar uses and the mechanic arts of life, they easily obtain a preference, in the opinion of most men, to those superior principles, which are the later growth of the human mind arrived to maturity and perfection; but, not affecting the corporeal sense, are thought to be so far deficient in point of solidity and reality—sensible and real, to common apprehensions, being the same thing. Although it be certain that the principles of science are neither objects of sense nor imagination; and that intellect and reason are alone the sure guides to truth."[1]

The omnipresence in sense of divine order or reason seems involved in turns of expression in 'Siris.' Law in nature is "reason immersed in matter"; philosophy is the endeavour to disengage this latent rationality. Sensible reality is reason entering consciously into sense. Without its presence sense is unintelligible: on the other hand, without phenomena of some sort reason in us remains latent. Here Berkeley's thought struggles for adequate expression:—

"Comprehending God and the creatures in one general notion, we may say that all things together make one universe, or τὸ πᾶν. But if we should say that all things make one God;—this would indeed be an erroneous notion of God, but would not amount to atheism, as long as mind or intellect was admitted to be τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν, the governing part. It is, nevertheless, more respectful, and consequently the truer notion of God, to suppose Him neither made up

[1] 'Siris,' § 454.

of parts, nor to be Himself a part of any whole whatever. All those who conceived the universe to be an animal, must, in consequence of that notion, suppose all things to be One. But to conceive God to be the sentient soul of an animal is altogether unworthy and absurd. There is no sense nor sensory, nor anything like a sense or sensory, in God. Sense implies an impression from some other being, and denotes a dependence in the soul which hath it. Sense is a passion: and passions imply imperfection. God knoweth all things as pure mind or intellect; but nothing by sense, nor in nor through a sensory."[1]

It is not so with finite intelligence as in man. We are embodied. Intellect in us is at present conditioned by the living matter we call our bodies. In passages in 'Siris,' there is a transition from contemplation of pure Intellect in God to contemplation of intellect as in men who share in the divine, which reminds one of sentences in Pascal:—

"Man is a compound of contrarieties, which breed a restless struggle in his nature, between flesh and spirit, the beast and the angel, earth and heaven, ever weighed down and ever bearing up. . . . It is the same in regard to our faculties. Sense at first besets and overbears the mind. The sensible appearances are all in all: our reasonings are employed about them: our desires terminate in them: we look no further for realities or causes;—till intellect begins to dawn, and cast a ray on this shadowy scene. We then perceive the true principle of unity, identity, and existence. Those things that before seemed to constitute the whole of Being, upon taking an intellectual view of things, prove to be but fleeting phantoms."[2]

As men rise from the life of sense towards the divine universalising reason that is found in and throughout

[1] 'Siris,' § 288. [2] Ibid., § 294.

sense, they approach that union with God which is the chief end of man. Berkeley approaches Divine or Universal Reason, the culmination of our higher faculties—as he ascends on the chain in which "each lower faculty in us is a step that leads to one above it,"—the uppermost bringing us to God, who *is* Reason. There is that in us, he insists, which is not given by sense; though it is in us in a dormant state till it is awakened by reflection; so that "this sort of learning seemeth in effect reminiscence." Ideas are not innate, if idea means phenomenon of sense; but the rational constitution of things is innate, and is postulated by implication, in all intelligent acts. Here is a pregnant passage in this connection:—

"Aristotle held that the mind of man was a *tabula rasa*, and that there were no innate ideas. Plato, on the contrary, held original ideas in the mind;—*i.e.*, notions which never were or can be in the sense. . . . Some perhaps may think the truth to be this:—that there are properly no ideas [*i.e.*, phenomena of sense], or passive objects, in the mind but what were derived from sense; but that there are also besides these her own acts or operations; such are *notions*. . . . This seemeth somewhat different from that of innate ideas, as understood by those moderns [*e.g.*, Locke] who have attempted to explode them."[1]

The hint given in 'Siris' of the evolution in man of what psychologists call "faculties" of cognition is in harmony with this:—

"The perceptions of sense are gross. . . . By experiments of sense we become acquainted with the lower faculties of

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[1] 'Siris,' § 308; also §§ 309, 310.

the soul; and from them, whether by a gradual evolution or ascent, we arrive at the highest. Sense supplies images to memory. These become subjects for fancy to work upon. Reason considers and judges of the imaginations. And these acts of reason become new objects of the understanding. In this scale each lower faculty is a step that leads to one above it. And the uppermost naturally leads to the Deity; which is rather the object of intellectual knowledge than even of the discursive faculty, not to mention the sensitive."[1]

Some of the most beautiful passages in 'Siris' are those which express the "restlessness" of the finite mind of man, when—becoming obscurely conscious of participation in divine universalising intellect — he strives to shake off the slumber in which he is, through sense, disposed to remain, so as to "recover the lost region of light"; although "perfect intuition" of the supreme intellectual order is by man unattainable.

'Siris' so much magnifies the universe of reality on the spiritual side, that the sensuous side almost disappears. The light of the Universal Mind shines so brightly, that there seems less need for unsubstantiating and reducing to impotence the material world by argument, as in the 'Principles.' Now and then, however, Berkeley's thoughts return to the old groove, and he finds support for them in the insight of earlier thinkers. Thus he brings Aristotle as well as Plato to defend the proposition that "actual knowledge and the thing known are all one"—otherwise expressed by Parmenides, when he taught that "to understand and to be are the same thing." Again,—

[1] 'Siris,' § 303.

"As to an *absolute* actual existence of sensible or corporeal things, it doth not seem to have been admitted either by Plato or Aristotle." And if passages are found in Aristotle which appear to imply that the phenomena presented to the senses exist independently of percipient mind, he reminds us that Aristotle distinguishes "a twofold existence—potential and actual. It will not, therefore, follow that, because a thing *is*, it must *actually* exist."[1] There is a *potential* existence which things have, distinct from the actual existence that is realised by the human factor of reality. Berkeley hardly saw what was involved in this great Aristotelian distinction.

The relative and dependent, because sensuous, character of Space is as favourite a thought as ever in 'Siris,' but less is said about the dependent and created reality of Time. "Natural things" are pronounced to be "only natural appearances. They are therefore such as we see and perceive them. Their real and their objective[2] natures are the same—passive without anything active, fluent and changing without anything permanent in them." Yet "they are not only first considered by all men, but most considered by most men. They and the phantoms that result from those appearances, the children of imagination grafted upon sense, such, for example, as pure space, are thought by many the very first in existence and stability, and to embrace and comprehend all other beings."[3] But when Berkeley speaks of "space," he does not mean a boundless entity that has real

[1] 'Siris,' § 312.

[2] "Objective"—*i.e.*, apparent.

[3] 'Siris,' § 292.

existence independently of all living perception, and within which the universe is contained. Real space with him, so far as it has positive meaning, is co-existence of sense impressions; empty space is absence of coexisting sense impressions. Real time is change in states and acts of which we are conscious, or in perceptions of sense; empty time is absence of change.

After all, perhaps this is only a paradoxical way of expressing what has been felt, and expressed in other ways, by deep thinkers from Plato to Kant. According to Kant, time and space relations have no absolute reality. They are the necessary preconditions of *our* knowledge of sensuous ideas or phenomena. Berkeley does not say this; for, instead of their necessity, he dwells upon their arbitrariness, their being the issue of divine Will rather than necessary implicates of human experience. But with Berkeley, as with Kant, space and time are virtually relations among phenomena, or mental functions limited by the horizon of the phenomenal world. They are not boundless external entities; concrete experience is their limit in the actual; and neither actual nor potential infinity is affirmed of them.

Berkeley and Kant, each in his own way, thus seem to close those sublime avenues towards the Infinite Reality that were presented in our assurance of Boundlessness as a matter of fact—within which our bodies are contained, and of Endlessness as a matter of fact—within which our mortal lives are contained. A sense of these mysteries was a powerful incitement to the metaphysical imagination of men like Pascal, and it has been a means of rousing dormant reflection on the ultimate meaning of things in many minds. Men

feel the fascination of their little spots in space, and their brief lives in time, being actually parts of what is boundless and endless, in one aspect; infinitely divisible, in another. It is thus that thought has found exercise for itself in vainly applying the category of quantity to the Infinite Reality. The "space" about which we speak, in its finite place relations man practically understands; and the time about which we speak, in its dates or finite relations man can also understand: but we find that we are somehow obliged to lose those relations in a Boundlessness that seems inconsistent with place, and time in an Endlessness that transcends all dates.

Yet Berkeley's way of thinking on this subject, and also Kant's, may lead us by other routes than the common one to the sublime goal. The starry heavens and the moral law are the two marvels of Kant's universe. Thought seems obliged to rise towards a point at which place and period, as quantities, are all withdrawn from Reality at the Divine point of view. These are different ways of showing that those relations belong to a lower sphere, and that they awaken the sense of the sublime from their inevitable incompleteness. They express our faith that God is not within the space which loses itself in Boundlessness, nor within the time which loses itself in Endlessness; that for God, in the Perfect Thought, place disappears, and past, present, and future times are as nothing; or otherwise, that space and time are modes of representation, absolutely real for finite intelligence, but which have no account when things are viewed, as man can never picture them, *sub specie æternitatis.*

Men must imagine things according to their finitude, not as they are in the Infinity. We suppose that for God things are neither placed nor dated; but this divine insight we cannot realise, unless our placing and dating intelligence can pass in philosophical imagination beyond relations of space into Boundlessness, and beyond periods of time into Endlessness.

CHAPTER IV.

NESCIENCE—OMNISCIENCE—FINAL FAITH.

SOME years before the death of Berkeley, his early sensuous idealism, and the assault on abstractions with which it was connected, were spoken of eulogistically in two books, which attracted little attention on their first appearance—although they gave rise silently to the chief revolution that has occurred in the methods and conceptions of modern philosophy, since its birth in the writings of Descartes. David Hume's 'Treatise of Human Nature' was published in 1739; his 'Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding' followed in 1748. In these books the negative influence of Berkeley's way of thinking about matter was distinctly perceptible. That influence had previously appeared in the now forgotten criticism of men not strong enough to affect the main current of European thought.

It is remarkable that although when Berkeley died the 'Treatise of Human Nature' had been before the world for fourteen years, and the 'Inquiry' for four years, and both, along with allusions to Berkeley,[1] were

[1] For instance, in the 'Treatise of Human Nature' (B. I. Pt. i. sect. 7), where he pronounces Berkeley's rejection of "abstract

full of discussions which led to the root of materialism and scepticism and causation, yet no allusion to Hume is found in 'Siris.' There is indeed no evidence that Hume's books were known to him. On the other hand, the references to Berkeley made by the Scottish philosopher are only to his juvenile writings. The 'Essay on Vision,' the 'Treatise on Human Knowledge,' and the 'Three Dialogues,' were familiar to the author of the 'Treatise of Human Nature.' But it does not appear that he had heard of 'Siris.' At any rate, if he had, it was probably on account of its tar-water nostrum,—not as the repository of principles which modified the refutation of materialism contained in the

ideas"—"one of the greatest and most valuable discoveries that has been made of late years in the republic of letters." In the 'Inquiry' (vol. ii., Note N) he observes that most of the writings of Berkeley "form the best lessons in scepticism which are to be found among the ancient and modern philosophers, Bayle not excepted." In thus transforming Berkeley into an unconscious sceptic, Hume ignores the Berkeleyan appeal to common reason on behalf of the beliefs (*a*) that the interpretable phenomena of sense, viewed objectively, are the real things; and (*b*) that in his moral consciousness of *himself*, as a free self-acting spiritual person, every man may realise substance and cause, and the spiritual basis of the universe. Negation of substance and power in Matter is only the introduction to Berkeley's spiritual philosophy. And with reference to personal identity, Hume himself confessed, in a passage already referred to, that "the difficulty was too hard" for his understanding. "I pretend not, however, to pronounce it absolutely insuperable. Others perhaps, or myself upon more mature reflections, may discover some hypothesis that will reconcile those contradictions."—(Appendix to vol. iii. p. 305 of 'Treatise of Human Nature.' Compare this with vol. i. pp. 436-457.) It is difficult to determine to what extent Hume meant in the end to modify his professed total scepticism. (J. S. Mill was arrested by a like difficulty in the way of Panphenomenalism, or reduction of Mind as well as Matter to "a series of feelings." See his 'Examination of Hamilton,' pp. 241, 242, third ed.)

volumes that emanated from Trinity College early in the century.

Hume must be regarded as immediately following Berkeley in the philosophical succession of European thought. For the next signal intellectual move was made by him. It consisted in an exaggeration of the negative part of his predecessor's thought, which Hume had come to regard as the whole. Hume was also Berkeley's immediate successor in subtle genius and intrepid philosophical analysis. In both the books named, he pursued, with kindred ingenuity and acuteness, to extreme sceptical issues, the war against empty abstractions on which Berkeley had entered with the ardour of youth, as the means of clearing the way to a vision of God. Berkeley's assault upon abstractions, with his destructive criticism of abstract substance and power, and an independent material world, had probably more than anything else to do with the intellectual awakening of Hume, and with the direction taken by his thought. Hume in his turn drew modern thought towards the problems on which we find it working now. This happened partly through the discipleship of those commonly called theological agnostics, who have possessed themselves of his heritage; partly through the antagonist reconstructive activity which his sceptical dissolution of human nature aroused. And the antagonism has worked either under the name of the common sense, or ineradicable conviction of man, as in Reid; or under the name of reason, pure and practical, implied in the possibility of experience and in moral agency, as in Kant.

Berkeley's latest thought, given in 'Siris,' and Hume's

sceptical disintegration of the foundations of experience, both fall within the third or Cloyne period of Berkeley's life; but, as I have said, his work in this period was unaffected by Hume. Yet the 'Treatise of Human Nature' and 'Siris,' both in their way works of speculative genius, are significant in the sequel. Berkeley, Hume, Reid, and Kant are four representative names in the philosophy of the eighteenth century. They are connected in the progress of philosophy as well as chronologically. The three last had reached middle life when Berkeley died. Hume, indeed, had then almost ended his course as a sceptical author; but Reid and Kant were only beginning to produce their thoughts. The three names were all unknown to Berkeley when he suddenly passed away at Oxford in 1753.

About that time other names of importance, if not representative men too, were becoming known. That of Hartley became for a time familiar by his 'Observations on Man,' which appeared in 1749, in which the laws of mental association were offered as the only and sufficient foundation and solvent of human knowledge. Hartley helped to educate Coleridge, as Coleridge tells us in one of the most remarkable chapters of his 'Biographia Literaria.' Almost contemporaneously with the 'Observations on Man,' Condillac's 'Essai sur l'Origine des Connaissances Humaines' laid the foundation of French empiricism, in an unintended caricature of Locke. Francis Hutcheson, too, a countryman of Berkeley and the pioneer of Reid, had magnified the common or rational sense of mankind, before Berkeley had embarked for America, and his death took place

only three years after the appearance of 'Siris.' But Hartley, Condillac, and Hutcheson seem to have been all outside the life that was wearing away at Cloyne and that ended at Oxford.

In Berkeley's mental history, as revealed in its three epochs, one seems to hear a sort of prelude or rehearsal of the three acts in which European philosophy has since presented itself. The negative reasoning, more acute than comprehensive, prominent in Berkeley's "Principles," represents the Berkeley to whom Hume and afterwards John Stuart Mill avowed allegiance. The appeal to common rational sense involved in consciousness of self, and in the significance and consequent interpretability of the ideas or phenomena presented to the senses—found in the earlier works as well as in 'Alciphron' and the 'Vindication,' forecast Reid, while they recall Descartes. Lastly, the philosophical rationalism of 'Siris,' which finds in the things of sense the constant working of Divine Reason, in which every human spirit shares, in its own way anticipates Kant and Hegel. What corresponds to association and evolution philosophy appears in his negative ideaism; the philosophy of common sense operates in his appeals to convictions that are universally latent; and Absolute Idealism is approached in the recognition of the unity of the universe in God. I do not say that he was fully conscious of all this.

The reaction that followed Hume's revolutionary scepticism disengaged the elements that were thus latent in Berkeley. The first discovered itself in

English and French association psychology, and latterly in a religiously agnostic natural science. The second appeared in the "vigorous protest" on behalf of the common sense or rational constitution of man, that was characteristic of Reid and other psychologists usually classed with him. The Platonic intellectualism of 'Siris' has found its development or counterpart in Kantian and post-Kantian philosophies. These three types of philosophy have occupied the interval between the disintegrating revolution of Hume and the present age. The first resembles the empirical reconstructive effort of Hume himself. The second is the conservative recoil of the moral and practical side of human nature. The third seeks to satisfy the utmost demands of reason in a coherent evolution of the thought which is implied in the universe of reality. Individual thinkers cannot, it is true, be summarily placed in cut-and-dry fashion in one or other of these three compartments. Their more striking features may place them in the first, or the second, or the third; but then these are more or less blended with features which belong to other types.

Although these three factors of philosophy may be traced in germ in Berkeley—when he is looked at all round,—the connection between his thought, and the subsequent development of either the second or the third, was coincidence more than conscious influence. Hume alone was distinctly conscious of the relation, for he read scepticism between the lines in Berkeley's new principles. He interpreted their existence in the light of their negations alone; and so, in his hands, the universe melts into phenomena associated in acci-

dental coexistences and successions. This attention of Hume only to the negative aspect of Berkeley has probably helped more than anything else to the popular association of their names as twin patrons of total scepticism; and also to Berkeley's being placed among "empiricists," who have not the courage of their opinions, or whose unconscious scepticism was logically laid bare in the 'Treatise of Human Nature.'

Hume undid all received knowledge and belief, by setting out with the assumption that the common theory of the philosophical experts of his time was empiricism. So he treats all so-called knowledge as ultimately only fluctuating phenomena; and man as unable to find either his own permanent freely acting personality, or a reliable material world, outside his individual self. This, described by him as the issue of the "common theory," was what Reid was fighting against in his long battle with "ideas." For the weakness Reid attributed to that theory lay in its empiricism, which left phenomena uninterpretable, because incapable of being signs of anything. They could, as isolated phenomena, be signs neither of changes in a wholly phenomenal material world, nor evidence of unperceived Matter; still less could they harmonise with Berkeley's Ideal World of supersensible realism. Hence it was in the empirical "idea"—supposed irrelative—*per se* unintelligible — yet accepted as the ultimate foundation — that Reid believed he found the seed-plant of total scepticism. This incoherent ideaism or phenomenalism he charged against what he calls the "Cartesian system," which, itself and in its Lockian modification, was supreme in the century that followed

the death of Descartes.[1] Its first advocates, he said, had tried, on those data, to prove the existence of matter, and also to prove their own existence as conscious agents; but their "proofs" were signal failures, as they rested wholly on this hollow foundation. They could not support any conclusion about anything, if they had only uninterpretable ideas or phenomena to start from, and if even the existence of a subject of these ideas or phenomena had to be introduced by an *ergo*.[2] Hume's strength, Reid thought, lay in his insight into this weakness of a philosophy which rested on this hollow foundation.

It is easy to see how faith disintegrates in Hume's hands, when he avails himself of this inadequate interpretation of the "Cartesian system"; or of the covert incoherent empiricism attributed to Locke, by those who interpret his 'Essay' in the letter more than in its spirit. Hume agrees with Locke in referring all that can claim our acceptance to the test of experience. But Hume's "experience" is at last only transitory phenomena, called by him "impressions." So what he means is, that one has no right to believe anything that has no counterpart in some particular idea or phenomenon that has been presented in sense, to which one can point as evidence of the validity of the belief. Our primary data, accordingly, are not "perceived things," as Reid held they were, but only phenomena—out of which Berkeley taught that all objects of

[1] See Reid's 'Inquiry into the Human Mind, or the Principles of Common Sense' (1764)—especially the Introduction and Conclusion.

[2] As in the "cogito *ergo* sum" of Descartes, according to Reid's interpretation of it, which makes it an inconclusive argument, instead of the expression of a fact.

sense are composed—in virtue, however, of a significance and interpretability due, according to him, to the grounding of All in Divine Reason and Will. By the rigid application of an empirical criterion, the spiritual universe of Berkeley was made by Hume to disappear. Except as a transitory phenomenon or "impression," the personal pronoun "I" could have no legitimate standing with him, because no meaning in terms of sensation. Then, too, as no phenomena could be perceived in the five senses, or imaged in the mind, that corresponded to a hyper-phenomenal meaning in the words "identity," "substance," "cause," or "power"—these emptied words with their supposed intellectual relations also disappear in the cloud-land of illusion. The fundamental beliefs which are the cement of human experience, along with the individual conscious personality which faith presupposes, and in and by which living persons are brought into participation with the universe of experience, are all dissolved—because there is nothing in sensation that responds. In the end we find ourselves, if we follow Hume on these lines, committing mental suicide, or as it were descending into an abyss where all assertions and all denials are alike uncertain, and indeed all alike incapable of being made, in the sceptical suspense of all intellectual life which ensues. Such was the issue of a method which refused to recognise in perception anything beyond the sensuous side of reality, or what Reid controverts under the name of the "ideal system." It ended in the disengagement of reality — permanence and coherence in things and persons — not from the unconscious things of sense only, but also from the conscious persons, out of whose

powers and capacities the things of sense draw their human reality and interest. Such was the outcome of the 'Treatise of Human Nature.'

Hume's 'Inquiry' proposed a way of recovery—in the form of what he called a "sceptical solution of sceptical doubts"; although he confessed that as a philosopher he was inconsistent in believing anything. The "solution" worked in this way. Repeated companionship of similar phenomena is found (although as a sceptic he cannot have assurance even of this) somehow to fuse the companion phenomena together, in the intensely felt and complex phenomena called beliefs. For he sees in beliefs only inexplicable modes of feeling that inexplicably follow an inexplicable custom of companionship among feelings. Phenomena thus come to cohere in those clusters or aggregates we call individual things; and our feelings in sense become perception of "things." Individual things, so formed by an unintelligible *objective* association, are found also connected among themselves, under laws of coexistence and succession, which experimental science makes known, after they have been thus formed.

In this supposed fact of steady association among feelings, which Hume employs for the constructive part of his philosophy, one can trace Berkeley. For it recalls Berkeley's explanation of how we learn to see—his explanation of our perceptions in all the senses —and his explanation of induction. It is so far on the lines of his analysis of perception and induction into expectation, and of expectation into custom or experience. But the "custom" was not with Berkeley, as with Hume, rooted in unreason. It was the ex-

pression of active omnipresent Mind. Its *rationale* was the constitution of the universe in God. He considered the habit that is founded on experience to be the occasion for awakening dormant intellectual life; and also the substitute for intellectual activity after custom has done its work—an unfatiguing way of preserving intellectual results. For habit is itself a phenomenon, and, like the phenomena of sense, needs objective reason to transform its results into science.

A philosophy like Hume's, which recognises only feelings or phenomena, divorced from Divine Reason, can make assertions and denials about anything only by being inconsistent with itself. But, on the other hand, in the ordeal thus applied to knowledge and belief, weak points are found in current philosophies, and so the way is prepared for improvement in the philosophical conceptions of the future. Otherwise this scepticism is an intellectual amusement which can conduct to no results; for it can neither be proved nor disproved on its own data. "A refutation" of total scepticism is not possible, except by a previous assumption of what, according to the total sceptic, has to be proved. Neither Reid nor Kant can in this sense be said to refute Hume. He professes, although a total sceptic, to *show* the essential absurdity of all experience: he demands evidence of the trustworthiness of the very faculty of reason by which he pretends to have reached his doubts—as if a sceptic can without contradiction be supposed to reach even a negative result. Hume is not refuted on his own ground, by Reid's assumption of the trustworthiness of fundamental faith; nor

by Kant's critical analysis of necessities of pure reason, implied in the reality of mathematics and physical science. To show, by means of suspected reason, that the "experience" which is charged with illusion—because it is only transitory sensation—presupposes more than sense, is to presume what the sceptic asks to be proved. There is always an abstract possibility that our faculties may be false; and if even self-consciousness and memory must be demonstrated before they can be used, we can never get to work at all.

Yet this scepticism, in itself incapable of logical proof or disproof, is a useful propellent force. It makes men of thought rethink and criticise anew the essential constitution of human knowledge. And it is always practically refuted, by the imperishable trust which reason reposes in its own Divine validity.

This is illustrated in all philosophical protests on behalf of the fundamental faith of humanity which underlies experience, and also by those critical justifications of the reasonableness of science and experience, which the history of philosophy records since the days of Hume. For Hume's writings have been the direct or indirect occasion of almost all the subsequent philosophical activity of Europe. They have obliged physicists and moralists and theologians to reconsider their assumptions, and to trace the roots of knowledge or experience further back, if they were to assure themselves, in a reasonable way, that it was rooted at all.

If phenomena alone form the reason or natural cause of all human knowledge and belief, can anything at all be believed consistently with this supposition? Ever-

changing phenomena must go where Berkeley sent the unperceived matter that inconsistently claimed to be perceived. They must either mean nothing, or else their meaning must be incoherent. Visible things could not have become what they are without something, in the form of constitutive faith or constitutive reason, that transcends sensuous data. Of that indispensable constituent Berkeley was at first only dimly aware, under the name of "suggestion"—which was really rational habit, unconscious of its own rationality. Going deeper, he next acknowledged fundamental rational intuition. And at last, the constitutive principle became in his eye Eternal Reason, in which we are in communion with the Universal Mind. Suggestion, rational intuition, and Universal Reason—gradually revealed in Berkeley—became, as I have already said, through Hume's disintegrative influence, disengaged—for more critical treatment, and have since been factors in new philosophical formations. Let us look at these formations.

First of all, physical science itself undertook to give a philosophic account of itself, without any higher help than blind faith in natural causes. Accordingly, one of the chief intellectual formations, in the interval since Hume, has been what is sometimes called Naturalism. In Naturalism, knowledge is supposed to be limited to physically produced beliefs—extended by "inference from particulars to particulars"[1]—all regarded as issue of blind evolution, through habit and association, indi-

[1] This extension of empirical knowledge is methodised by J. S. Mill in his 'Logic.'

vidual or inherited. With regard to everything beyond, this philosophy is professedly agnostic.

Agnosticism is sometimes distinguished from the Pyrrhonism or total scepticism that does not leave room for proof or disproof of anything. The latter dissolves *all* belief, even belief in relations of coexistence or succession among phenomena. The former only alleges that outside the coexisting and successive phenomena of *sense* there is nothing to be believed—that all assertions or denials about supposed realities beyond the range of natural science are illusions. This agnosticism is Berkeley's sense symbolism, incoherently accepted, because rejected in its theistic postulate. Atheism and Theism are alike incapable of being proved or disproved, and are alike foreign to human life, at the exclusive point of view of physical science.

An incoherent empiricism, as I have said, was Hume's own way of recovery from total suspense of all belief and all disbelief.[1] It finds expression with him in the proposed "sceptical" solution of "sceptical doubts."[2] This "solution" consists in blindly acknowledging the reconstructive tendency of custom, as the physical cause of our irresistible feeling about law in nature—a blind expectation of natural uniformity. "Wherever the repetition of any particular act or operation produces a propensity to renew the same act or operation, without being impelled by any reason or process of the understanding, we always say that this propensity is

[1] In his 'Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding.' "Total suspense" his state in the 'Treatise of Human Nature' some years before.

[2] 'Inquiry,' sect. v.

the effect of Custom. By employing that word we pretend not to have given the ultimate reason of such propensity. We only point out a principle of human nature, which is universally acknowledged, and which is well known by its effects. *Perhaps we can push our inquiries no further.*"

This "sceptical solution" expresses the philosophy that is at the root of the scientific Agnosticism of the present day, with its far-reaching and beautiful conception of Evolution. But evolution itself is only a comprehensive mode of physical causation — of sense significance and interpretability, although it may turn out to be the most comprehensive form of natural law, —the highest expression of the passive sense symbolism, or physical causation, which Berkeley has so emphatically contrasted with objective spiritual agency.

A second philosophical formation, since Berkeley's time, appears at the opposite extreme to scientific Agnosticism — not without illustrating how curiously extremes may approach one another. It has arisen in this way. Critical search into the implicates of experience was initiated by Kant. He went in quest of something which should be found inevitable in science, because without it phenomena could not be intelligible. This critical search, with much expenditure of speculative genius, seems to have promoted a Gnosticism which offers, as the reasonable or philosophical conception of the universe of things and persons, a uniting principle which, in its rational evolution, is credited with explaining the universe of reality in the perfect coherence of Divine Thought. Some anticipatory sounds

of like import may perhaps be heard in 'Siris.' But they became distinct after the Kantian criticism or justification of science and experience. Fichte's dissatisfaction with any professed philosophy that failed to attain intellectual unity, confirmed the philosophical prejudice of Germany against what Bacon (speaking of theology) calls "abruptness"; in acknowledgment of the inexplicable residuum of mystery, which for ever forbids absolute completeness in human science, or *its* development into Omniscience. "As for perfection or completeness in divinity, it is not to be sought. In divinity many things must be left abrupt." Yet the absolute Idealist seems to claim, as attainable philosophy for man, a perfect rational articulation of the universe of things and persons as the supposed unity of thought in God. This, if it could be attained, would totally eliminate mysteries from our physical and moral experience. When it has fulfilled its promise, it has translated all faith into science. But I cannot find that this all-comprehensive system tallies with the experience which it is bound to formulate adequately and to explain; or that it has yet got so far as to solve even so clamant a mystery as the existence on this planet of immoral agents and moral evil.[1] We expect intellectual extrication from the enigmas of life, and we are offered the "organisation of thought." We look for bread and we find a stone.

[1] The distinction between things and persons—between nature and moral agency—which this Gnosticism fails, as far as I see, to provide for, is touched in Wordsworth's well-known noonday hymn:—

> "Look up to Heaven! the industrious Sun
> Already half his race hath run;
> He *cannot* halt nor go astray,
> But our immortal Spirits *may*."

Intermediate between the Agnostics, who are satisfied with a "sceptical solution" of sceptical doubts, and Gnostics, who offer a key to Omniscience — there are those, both before and since Berkeley, who, with faith in the perfect reasonableness of the universe of reality, have not faith in the ability of man to reach fully and apply the Divine thought in which this reasonableness consists. Legitimate relief from scepticism — rational restoration of belief—wise philosophy for finite intelligence—is by them sought otherwise. They find human intelligence at last obliged to take the form of Faith or moral trust. This Faith is not made by philosophy: philosophy cannot live without it. It is more or less in this attitude that we find Locke and Berkeley; Descartes, Pascal, and Buffier, and long afterwards their countrymen, Jouffroy, Royer Collard, and Cousin; Reid and Hamilton, in Scotland; in Germany, Jacobi, and more covertly Kant.

Philosophical restoration of what is called Faith, because it cannot be transformed by man into a perfect unity realisable in human imagination, has, in some instances, been prompted more by moral reaction against fundamental doubt than by speculative interest in rational unity. Philosophy of this type does not pretend to reveal in its infinity our concrete universe placed and dated. On the contrary, it offers faith, critically verified by reflection, as the consummation of philosophical knowledge. It makes philosophers the intellectual and moral police for guarding men against Agnostic and Gnostic extremes. It assigns to philosophy an office that has been likened to that of the spear of Achilles, which healed the wounds given by

itself. It condemns, as irrational, the expectation that a philosophy realisable by man can ever evolve in thought the infinite reality. It distinguishes between the Omniscient Intellect, that sees all in each and each in all, and our necessarily faith-constituted knowledge. Those who look philosophically at things from this point, are satisfied that men find what is deepest and truest in their possible relations to reality, not in completed thought, but in the moral trust above which a human being cannot rise at last. They are satisfied that if "philosophy" is Omniscience, then there can for man be no philosophy. *Their* philosophy is recognition of the predicament in which *man* finds himself at last, when he applies reason to the universe. It is an awakening of the fundamental factors of intelligence in man; and the consequent confession that, for our intelligence, and with our finite experience, timeless thought about real things and persons must be attenuated formalism, which leaves in darkness the enigmas that are of chief human interest.

I find no reason to suppose that human thought can ever be sublimated philosophically into Divine Thought —that human science of what must ever appear to men under relations of time can be other than "broken"— and that it does not always need to be cemented by the ultimate faith which refuses to be fully transformed into science, though its reasonableness may be vindicated in philosophy. Only Omniscience can dispense with this faith, which is at the heart of natural science as well as of religious thought.

The three elements, dimly discernible in Berkeley,

disengaged by the scepticism of Hume, which have thus given rise to three opposed philosophical formations, each of which struggles for predominance, have severally their right to exist, as so far genuine issues of the attempt to know things and persons philosophically. May it not be said of Agnosticism and Gnosticism, that each is right in much that it affirms, but wrong in something that it denies, and that mutual explanations might induce approximation to the intermediate Philosophy of Faith? Perhaps the next step in advance may be the realisation of a better understanding of the mutual relations of the three, and of the degree in which the ultimate *credenda* are *intelligenda.*

Is there nothing in changing experience to which we can look as eternally fixed? Though man fails to fully unfold the divine thought latent in nature and spirit, for satisfaction of speculative curiosity,—is there not the moral anchorage to which Butler with grave and anxious countenance points, when he proclaims the supremacy of conscience, and at which Kant hears the voice of the awful categorical imperative? Although a complete intellectual solution of the mystery of existence in the Omniscience which leaves no room for final Faith may be unattainable, we can still be told by Butler, and, at the end of a more subtle course of reasoning, by Kant, that we ought to live the absolutely good, even while we cannot fully realise in philosophical imagination the concrete universe that is revealed to us under relations of time. The primary postulate of applied reason is the moral trustworthiness of the

Universal Power—theistic or optimist faith that the universe, fundamentally divine, exists for a moral purpose. According to this, the evolutions of Matter, with the physical sciences in which the material world is interpreted in faith, are subordinate and ancillary to the ethical and religious faith that is at the foundation of all our insight. The starry heavens may dissolve, but neither the divine constitution of the universe, nor the moral agents contained in it, can thus pass away. More or less enlightened Faith in the omnipresence of omniscient and omnipotent Goodness is the tacit postulate of all human experience of reality.

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